

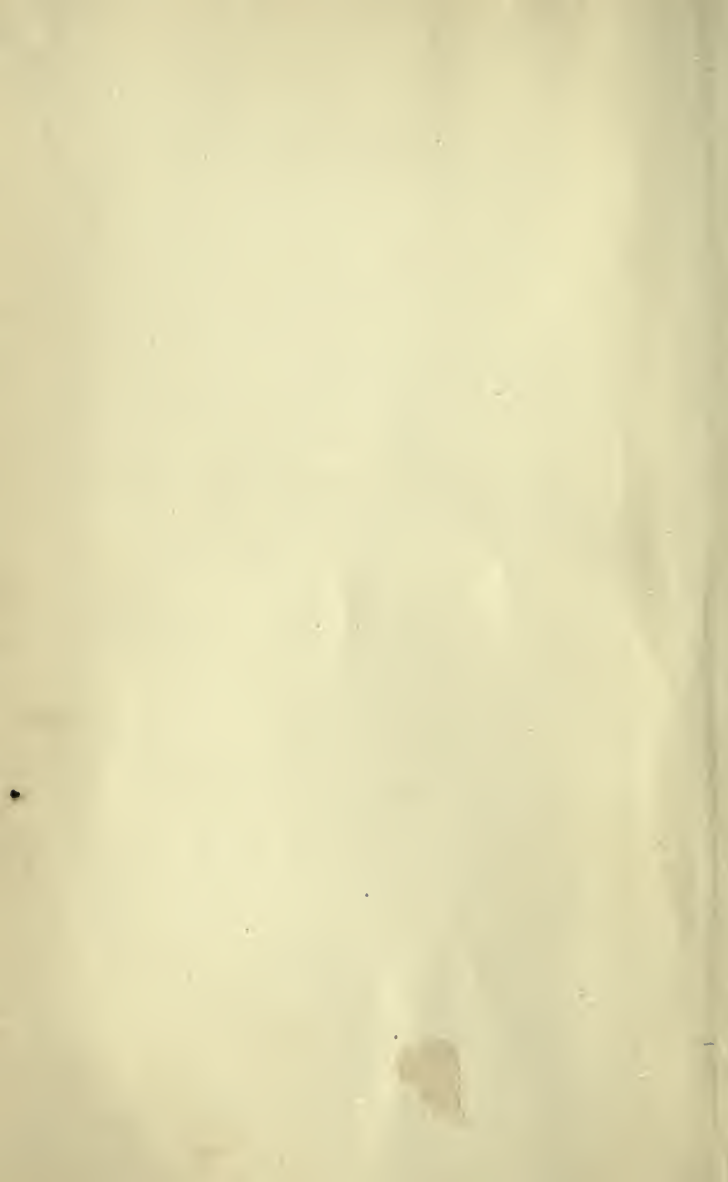
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SELECT WORKS OF VOLTAIRE.

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VOL. II.



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# THE HENRIADE,

WITH

*Brown*

## THE BATTLE OF FONTENOY,

DISSERTATIONS ON MAN, LAW OF NATURE, 2

DESTRUCTION OF LISBON,

TEMPLE OF TASTE, AND TEMPLE OF FRIENDSHIP,

FROM THE FRENCH OF

M. DE VOLTAIRE;

WITH NOTES FROM ALL THE COMMENTATORS.

EDITED BY

O. W. WIGHT, A.M.



NEW YORK:

DERBY & JACKSON, 119 NASSAU STREET.

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## EDITOR'S PREFACE.

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THIS volume of Voltaire's Select Works contains his *Henriade*, his *Poem on the Battle of Fontenoy*, his *Dissertations in Verse on Man*, his *Poem on the Law of Nature*, his *Poem on the Disaster of Lisbon*, his *Temple of Taste*, and his *Temple of Friendship*.

Of the *Henriade*, we are inclined to say nothing more than that it is the only epic poem in the French language that has not perished. M. Villemain, the most accomplished and judicious of French critics, calls it a "monument of an ingenious art and of a flourishing epoch. It has made better known a king whose glory was obscured by the long apotheosis of Louis XIV. Bossuet, in truth, said to Louis XIV admirable things in regard to Henry's goodness of heart, and love for his people; but it was a secret eulogy. The Christian pulpit, and the great writers of the seventeenth century, spoke little of Henry. Perhaps they had not yet pardoned his heresy. . . . The success of the *Henriade* was great, and resounded through all Europe. It was criticised, vaunted, and reprinted without cessation. The King of Prussia wished to be its editor, and, in an admiring preface, placed it by

the side of the *Æneid*. Posterity has greatly reduced this praise; but the *Henriade*, without being an original creation, preserves a distinct character and a separate place among the many attempts at the epic."<sup>1</sup>

The *Battle of Fontenoy*, which is intensely national in its spirit, deserves a place among Voltaire's serious poems.

The *Discours sur l'Homme* is rightly judged by Lord Brougham to be a performance of the highest merit. "As the subject is didactic, his talents, turned towards grave reasoning and moral painting, adapted rather to satisfy the understanding than to touch the heart, and addressing themselves more to the learned and polite than to the bulk of mankind, occupied here their appointed province, and had their full scope. Pope's moral essays gave the first hint of these beautiful compositions; but there is nothing borrowed in them from that great moral poet, and there is no inferiority in the execution of the plan. . . . The panegyric on friendship, in the fourth *Discours*, is perhaps unequalled on that trite subject."<sup>2</sup>

The *Loi Naturelle* is a pleasing poem, and quite free from exceptionable passages.

The object of the *Désastre de Lisbonne* is to oppose those who deny the existence of evil. It is not without poetic merit, and the argument is conducted with decency.

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<sup>1</sup> *Cours de Littérature Française*, nouvelle édition, t. i, p. 184.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Brougham's *Life of Voltaire*, in the preceding vol., p. 46.



Although the *Temple du Gout* is half prose, it may, without impropriety, be included in a volume of Voltaire's poetry.

The *Temple d'Amitié* is a pleasing poem, and fitly closes the volume.

The translations of the poems contained in this volume were made by T. Smollett, M. D., T. Francklin, M. A., and others, nearly a century ago, but, though vigorous and spirited, were filled with errors. They have been patiently compared with the originals and revised by our friend, Mr. F. W. Ricord, who labored with us, in years gone by, on M. Cousin's *History of Philosophy*.

From the best French editions of Voltaire we have added numerous notes, for a translation of which we are also indebted to Mr. Ricord.

In due time we shall add another volume of Voltaire's poems. In "his shorter productions, his *epigrams*, *vers de société*, and *jeux d'esprit*," says Lord Brougham, "he was by common consent admitted to have excelled all his contemporaries—probably all the wits that ever lived and wrote." Good translations of these are difficult to make or procure, and the rich field of French classical literature invites us, for the present, in other directions.

O. W. WIGHT.

AUGUST, 1859.



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## OUTLINE OF THE HENRIADE.

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THE subject of *The Henriade* is the siege of Paris, commenced by Henry of Valois and Henry the Great, and concluded by the latter.

The scene of action extends no further than from Paris to Ivry, where the famous battle took place, which decided both the destiny of France and that of the house of Capet.

The poem is founded upon a well-known portion of history, the truth of which has been preserved in the principal events. The less important have been suppressed, or arranged according to the demands of a poem. In doing this, an effort has been made to avoid the fault of Lucan, who produced nothing more nor less than a bombastic gazette; and a warrant for such effort has been found in the following lines of M. Despréaux:

“Away, ye stupid poets, who rehearse,  
In faultless measure your didactic verse.

\* \* \* \* \*

To capture Lille, lo! Dôle must first be sack'd;  
And that you be precise as Mezaray,  
You must raze, too, the ramparts of Courtray!”<sup>1</sup>

There has been an aim, here, to conform, simply, to the usual practice in tragedies, where the events are made to yield to the rules of the theatre.

Besides, this poem is not more historical than any other. Camoëns, who is the Virgil of the Portuguese, has celebrated an event of which he was himself a witness. Tasso sang a crusade

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<sup>1</sup> Boileau, *Art Poétique*, Chant ii.

known throughout all the world, and omitted neither Peter the Hermit, nor the processions. Virgil constructed the story of his *Æneid* from the fables of his times, which passed for the veritable history of the descent of *Æneas*, in Italy.

Homer, a contemporary of Hesiod, and who, consequently, lived about a hundred years after the taking of Troy, might, in his youth, have seen some of the old men who had known the heroes of that war. What should please still in Homer, is, that the foundation of his work is not a romance, that the characters are not of his imagination, that he has painted men as they were, with their good and bad qualities, and that his book is a monument of the manners of those remote times.

The *Henriade* is composed of two parts: real events which are recounted, and fictions. These fictions are all drawn from the region of the marvellous, such as the prediction of Henry's conversion, of the protection given to him by Saint Louis, his apparition, the fire from heaven destroying those magical performances which were then so common, etc. Others are purely allegorical: for example, the voyage of Discord to Rome, Politics and Fanaticism personified, the temple of Love, the Passions and Vices, etc.

If, in some places, the same attributes have been given to these personified passions as were given to them by the pagans, it is because these allegorical attributes are too well known to be changed. In our most Christian works, in our paintings and tapestries, Love is represented with arrows, and Justice with a balance, without imparting to these representations the least tinge of paganism. The word *Amphitrite*, in our poetry, signifies simply the sea, and not the wife of Neptune. The field of Mars means, simply, War, etc. If any one is of a different opinion, he must be referred to that great master, M. Despréaux, who says:

“ 'Tis, with a scruple vain, endeavoring to alarm,  
'Tis seeking to attract without a single charm.  
'Twill be a sin, ere long, to paint e'en Prudence' face,  
Give Themis scales, upon her eyes a bandage place,  
To figure War advancing with a brow of brass,



To represent old Time with scythe and hour-glass.  
False zeal, at length, supreme, will strive to force,  
All tropes and metaphors, and such like, from discourse." <sup>1</sup>

Having given some account of the contents of this book, a word or two should be said of the spirit with which it was composed. There has been no desire to flatter or to slander. Those who may here find recorded the bad actions of their ancestors, have simply to repair them by their own virtue. Those whose ancestors are here eulogized, are under no obligations to the author, who has had truth alone in view; and the only use that they should make of these praises, is to merit similar for themselves.

If, in this new edition, omission has been made of some verses which contained severe truths concerning popes who dishonored the holy see by their crimes, it is not with a design to affront the court of Rome by supposing that it could desire to justify the conduct of these wicked pontiffs: Frenchmen who condemn the bad deeds of Louis XI, and of Catherine de Medici, may, doubtless, speak with horror of Alexander VI. The author has omitted this portion simply because it was too long, and because it contained lines with which he was not satisfied.

Many names have been substituted for those which appeared in the first editions, because they were deemed more suitable to the subject, or because the names themselves seemed to be more sonorous. The aim of a poet should always be to make good verses. Omission has been made of the death of young Boufflers, killed, as was supposed, by Henry IV, because, in this circumstance, the death of the young man seemed to render Henry IV somewhat odious, without rendering him greater. Duplessis-Mornay is made to go to England, to the court of Queen Elizabeth, because, in fact, he was sent there, and his negotiations there are still remembered. This same Duplessis-Mornay is made use of in the rest of the poem, because, having played the part of confidant of the king in the first Canto, it would have been ridiculous to put another in his

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<sup>1</sup> Boileau, *Art Poétique*, Chant v.



place in the following Cantos; even as it would be impertinent in a tragedy (in *Berenice*, for example) for Titus to confide to Paulin in the first act, and to some one else in the fifth. If any one is determined to put false interpretations upon these changes, the author will not be thereby disturbed: he knows that every one who writes is exposed to the shafts of malice.

The most important point is religion, which forms in a great part the subject of the poem, and which is its sole denouement.

The author believes that he has explained himself in many places with a vigorous precision which can afford no hold to censure. Such is, for example, this passage concerning the TRINITY:

La puissance, l'amour, avec l'intelligence,  
Unis et divisés, composent son essence.

And again:

Il reconnaît l'Église ici-bas combattue,  
L'Élise toujours une, et partout étendue,  
Libre, mais sous un chef, adorant en tout lieu  
Dans le bonheur des saints la grandeur de son Dieu:  
Le Christ, de nos péchés victime renaissante,  
De ses élus chéris nourriture vivante  
Descend sur les autels à ses yeux éperdus,  
Et lui découvre un Dieu sous un pain qui n'est plus.

If the author has not been able to express himself everywhere with this theological exactness, the reasonable reader will supply the deficiency. It would be gross injustice to examine the whole work as a treatise on theology. This poem is replete with the love of religion and of the laws; rebellion and persecution are here equally held up for detestation. A book written in such a spirit must not be judged by a single word.



## ABRIDGED HISTORY

OF THE EVENTS UPON WHICH THE PLOT OF THE HENRIADE  
IS FOUNDED

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THE fire of the civil wars, of which Francis II saw the first sparks, was kindled throughout France during the minority of Charles IX. Religion was the cause of it among the people, and the pretext for it among the nobility. The queen mother, Catherine de Medici, had, more than once, hazarded the safety of the kingdom to preserve her authority, arming the Catholic party against the Protestant, and the Guises against the Bourbons, in order to overwhelm the one by means of the other.

France had then, unfortunately, many too powerful, and, consequently, factious nobles; a people rendered fanatical and barbarous by means of that party fury inspired by false zeal; and infant kings, in whose name the State was ravaged. The battles of Dreux, of Saint-Denys, of Jarnac, of Moncontour, had signalized the unhappy reign of Charles IX. The greatest cities had been taken, retaken, and sacked alternately by the opposing parties; prisoners of war put to death by the most refined tortures; churches reduced to ashes by the Reformers, temples by the Catholics; and poisoning and assassination were only regarded as the revenge of cunning enemies.

Saint Bartholomew's Day put the climax to such enormities. Henry the Great, then king of Navarre, and, though very young, chief of the reformed party, in the bosom of which he had been born, was allured to court with the most powerful lords of this party. He was married to the Princess Margaret, sister of Charles IX. It was in the midst of the rejoicings attending these nuptials, in the midst of a most profound peace, and after the most solemn oaths, that Catherine de

Medici ordered those massacres whose memory must be perpetuated (frightful and disgraceful as it is for the name of France), in order that men, always ready to enter into religious quarrels, may see to what excess party spirit may finally conduct.

Then were seen in a court which boasted of its refinement, a woman, celebrated for the charms of her mind, and a young king twenty-three years of age, ordering, in cold blood, the death of more than a million of their subjects. This same nation which now thinks upon this crime with a shudder, committed it with transport and with zeal. More than a hundred thousand men were assassinated by their countrymen; and had it not been for the wise precautions of some virtuous persons, like the President Jeannin, the Marquis de Saint-Herem, etc., one half of France would have murdered the other half.

Charles IX did not live long after the massacre of Saint Bartholomew. His brother, Henry III, left the throne of Poland to plunge France into new misfortunes, of which it was relieved by Henry IV, so justly surnamed *The Great* by posterity, who alone can give this title.

Henry III, on returning to France, found there two dominant parties: one was that of the Reformers, revived from its own ashes, more violent than ever, and having at its head the same Henry the Great, then king of Navarre; the other was that of the League, a powerful faction, formed, little by little, by the princes de Guise, encouraged by the popes, fomented by Spain, increased every day by the artifice of the monks, consecrated, apparently, by the zeal of the Catholic Church, but tending only to rebellion. Its chief was the Duke de Guise, surnamed *Le Balafré*, a prince of brilliant reputation, and who, having more great than good qualities, seemed born to change the face of the State in these troublous times.

Henry III, instead of crushing the two parties under the weight of royal authority, fortified them by his weakness. He hoped to make a great political stroke, by declaring himself the chief of the League, but he became nothing more than its

slave. The Duke de Guise, intent upon his dethronement, compelled him to make war upon the King of Navarre, his brother-in-law and heir presumptive, whose sole thought was the re-establishment of royal authority, not for the sake of Henry III alone, but for himself too, who would, in time, succeed to the throne.

The army which Henry III sent against the king, his brother-in-law, was defeated at Coutras; his favorite Joyeuse was there slain. The King of Navarre wished no other fruit of his victory than a reconciliation with his royal brother. Although a conqueror, he asked peace, but the vanquished monarch dared not accept it, so much did he fear the Duke de Guise and the League. Guise, at this very time, had just scattered an army of Germans. This success of the Balafré humiliated still more the King of France, who regarded himself as conquered both by the Leaguers and the Reformers.

The Duke de Guise, inflated by his glory, and strengthened by the weakness of his sovereign, went to Paris in spite of contrary orders. Then happened the famous battle of the barricades; when the people drove off the guards of the king, and when that monarch was obliged to fly from his capital. Guise did more: he obliged the king to hold the States-General of the kingdom at Blois, and laid his plans so well, that he was ready to share the royal authority, with the consent of those who represented the nation, and under show of the most respectable formalities. Henry III, aroused by so imminent a danger, caused the assassination, at the Chateau de Blois, of this enemy, as well as of his brother, the cardinal, more violent and more ambitious than even the Duke de Guise.

What happened to the Protestant party after the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, happened then to the League: the death of the leaders reanimated the party. The Leaguers raised the mask; Paris closed its gates; vengeance alone was thought of. Henry III was regarded as the assassin of the defenders of religion, and not as a king who had punished his guilty subjects. Pressed on all sides, it was necessary for him to become reconciled, at last, with the King of Navarre. These

two princes pitched their camp before Paris; and here it is that the *Henriade* commences.

One brother of the Duke de Guise was yet alive; it was the Duke de Mayenne, an intrepid man, more skilful, however, than energetic, who found himself, all at once, at the head of a faction aware of its own strength, and animated by vengeance and fanaticism.

Almost the whole of Europe engaged in this war. The celebrated Elizabeth, queen of England, who esteemed highly the King of Navarre, and who had a great desire to see him, succored him several times with men, money, and vessels; and it was Duplessis-Mornay who always went to England for these succors. On the other hand, the branch of the house of Austria that reigned in Spain, favored the League, in the hope of wresting some advantage from a kingdom rent by civil war. The popes fought the King of Navarre, not only by excommunications, but by all the artifices of diplomacy, and by the little assistance of men and money that the court of Rome is ever able to furnish.

In the mean time, Henry III was on the point of becoming master of Paris, when he was assassinated at Saint-Cloud by a Dominican friar, who committed this parricide with the idea that he was obeying the command of God, and that he would suffer martyrdom in a holy cause; and this murder was not only the crime of this fanatic friar, but it was the crime of the whole party. The creed of the Leaguers was, that the king should die if odious to the Court of Rome. The preachers proclaimed it in all their sermons; it was published in all those contemptible books which inundated France, and which are now preserved in a few libraries, as curious monuments of an age equally barbarous in letters and in manners.

After the death of Henry III, the King of Navarre (Henry the Great), acknowledged king of France by the army, had to contend with all the forces of the League, those of Rome and of Spain, and likewise to conquer his kingdom. He besieged Paris several times. Among the great men who were useful to him in this war, and of whom some use is made in this



poem, were the Marshals d'Aumont and de Biron, the Duke de Bouillon, etc. Duplessis-Mornay enjoyed his most intimate confidence until he changed his religion. Mornay served Henry IV with his person in the armies, with his pen against the excommunications of the popes, and with his great skill as a negotiator, in procuring assistance for him among Protestant princes.

The principal leader of the League was the Duke de Mayenne; next to him in point of reputation, was the Chevalier d'Aumale, a young prince, easily recognized by that haughtiness and brilliant courage which distinguished the house of Guise. They obtained repeated assistance from Spain, but no account is here made of any except the famous Count d'Egmont, son of the admiral, who brought thirteen or fourteen hundred lances to the Duke de Mayenne. Many battles were fought, of which the most famous, the most decisive, and most glorious for Henry IV, was the battle of Ivry, where the Duke de Mayenne was conquered, and the Count d'Egmont was slain.

During the course of this war, the king became enamored of the beautiful Gabrielle d'Estrées; but his zeal in the cause in which he was engaged was not affected by this passion, as may be seen by a letter still preserved in the king's library, wherein he says to his mistress: "If I am conquered, you know me well enough to believe that I shall not fly; but my last thoughts shall be of God and of you."

Several important facts are omitted, which, having no place in the poem, ought not to be spoken of here. No mention is made of the expedition of the Duke de Parma to France, which served only to delay the fall of the League; nor is any thing said of that Cardinal de Bourbon, who was for some time a phantom king, under the name of Charles X. It is sufficient to say, that, after so many misfortunes, and such desolation, Henry IV became a Catholic, and that the Parisians, who hated his religion, and revered his person, then acknowledged him as their king.





## ESSAY

### ON THE CIVIL WARS OF FRANCE.<sup>1</sup>

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HENRY THE GREAT was born, in 1553, in the little town of Pau, the capital of Bearn. Antoine de Bourbon, duke de Vendôme, his father, was of the royal blood of France, and chief of the branch of Bourbons (formerly synonymous with *bourbeux, muddy*), and thus called from a fief of that name, which fell to their house by a marriage with the heiress of Bourbon.

The house of Bourbon, from Louis IX until Henry IV, had been almost always neglected, and was reduced to such a degree of poverty, that it has been asserted that the famous Prince de Condé, brother of Antoine de Navarre, and uncle of Henry the Great, had a yearly income of only six hundred livres as his patrimony.

The mother of Henry was Jeanne d'Albret, daughter of Henry d'Albret, a prince without merit, but a good man, rather indolent than peaceable, who sustained with too much resignation the loss of his kingdom, which was taken from his father by a Papal bull, supported by the arms of Spain. Jeanne, daughter of a prince so feeble, had a still more feeble husband, to whom she brought by marriage the principality of Bearn, and the empty title of King of Navarre.

This prince, who lived in a time of factions and civil wars, when firmness of mind is so necessary, exhibited nothing but incertitude and irresolution in his conduct. He never knew to what party or to what religion he belonged. Without talent

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<sup>1</sup> The author wrote this article in English (1708). The *Henriade* was printed in London, ~~1710~~.

for the court, and without capacity for a military employment, he passed his life in favoring his enemies and ruining his servants; at the same time he was constantly mocked by Catherine de Medici, trifled with and crushed by the Guises, and the dupe of himself. He received a mortal wound at the siege of Rouen, where he fought for the cause of his enemies against the interests of his own house. He exhibited, in dying, the same restless and irresolute spirit that had agitated him throughout all his life.

Jeanne d'Albret was of a character exactly opposite,—full of courage and resolution, feared by the court of France, cherished by the Protestants, and esteemed by both parties. She had all the qualities which make great statesmen, and was, at the same time, ignorant of all the petty artifices of an intriguer. It is very remarkable that she should have become a Protestant at the time when her husband returned to Catholicism, and that she should remain as steadily attached to her new religion as Antoine was unsteady in his own. Thus it was that she found herself at the head of one party while her husband was the sport of another.

Anxious for the education of her son, she determined to take the whole charge of it upon herself. Henry received, at his birth, all the excellent qualities of his mother, and carried them, in the end, to a still higher degree of perfection. He inherited from his father nothing but a certain easiness of temper, which in Antoine degenerated into irresolution and feebleness, but which in Henry was benevolence and good nature.

He was not brought up, like a prince, in that mean and effeminate pride which enervates the body, enfeebles the mind, and hardens the heart. His nourishment was homely, and his dress plain. He always went bare-headed. He was sent to school with young persons of his own age; he climbed with them upon the rocks and summits of the neighboring mountains, according to the custom of the country and the times.

While he was thus brought up in the midst of his subjects, in a sort of equality, without which it is easy for a prince to forget that he is a man, fortune disclosed in France a bloody



scene; and, through the ruins of a kingdom on the verge of destruction, over the ashes of princes carried off by a premature death, opened him the way to a throne which he could restore to its ancient splendor only after having won it with the sword.

Henry II, king of France and chief of the House of Valois, was killed at Paris in a tourney, which proved to be, in Europe, the last of those romantic and perilous diversions.

He left four sons: Francis II, Charles IX, Henry III, and the Duke d'Alençon. All these unworthy descendants of Francis I successively ascended the throne, except the Duke d'Alençon; and all died, fortunately, in the flower of their age, and without posterity.

The reign of Francis II was short, but remarkable. Then arose those factions, and then began those calamities which, for thirty years in succession, ravaged the kingdom of France.

He married the celebrated and unhappy Mary Stuart, queen of Scotland, whose beauty and weakness led her into great errors and into still greater misfortunes, and, finally, to a melancholy death. She was absolute mistress of her young husband, a prince eighteen years of age, without vices and without virtues, of a delicate frame and of a feeble mind.

Incapable of governing by herself, she yielded without reserve to the Duke de Guise, her mother's brother, who, through her instrumentality, influenced the mind of the king, and thus laid the foundation of the glory of his house. It was at this time that Catherine de Medici, widow of the late king, and mother of the reigning one, gave the first exhibition of that ambition which she had skilfully concealed during the life of Henry II. But finding that she could not control her son and the young princess, whom he loved passionately, she determined to act, for awhile, as their instrument, and to make use of their power to establish her authority. Thus the Guises governed the king and the two queens. Masters of the court, they became the masters of the whole kingdom: the one thing, in France, is always the necessary consequence of the other.

The house of Bourbon groaned under the oppression of the

house of Lorraine; and Antoine, king of Navarre, suffered quietly many affronts pregnant with danger. The Prince de Condé, his brother, still more indignantly treated, tried to shake off the yoke; and, to this end, associated with himself the Admiral de Coligni, chief of the house of Châtillon. The court had no enemy more terrible. Condé was more ambitious, more enterprising, more active; Coligni was more steady, more moderate in his conduct, more capable of being the leader of a party: as unfortunate, truly, in war as Condé, but capable of repairing by his skill what seemed irreparable; more dangerous after a defeat than his enemy after a victory; adorned, besides, with as many virtues as such stormy times and the spirit of faction would admit.

The Protestants now began to be numerous, and they soon perceived their strength.

The superstition, the impostures of the monks of that period, the immense power of Rome, the love of novelty, the ambition of Luther and of Calvin, the statecraft of a number of princes, served to increase this sect, free, indeed, from superstition, but tending as impetuously to anarchy as the religion of Rome did to tyranny.

The Protestants had undergone in France the most violent persecutions, the ordinary effect of which is to multiply proselytes. Their sect grew in the midst of scaffolds and tortures. Condé, Coligni, his two brothers, their partisans, and all those who were oppressed by the Guises, embraced, at the same time, the Protestant religion. They united with such concert their complaints, their vengeance, and their interests, that a revolution took place, at the same time, both in religion and in the State.

The first undertaking was a conspiracy to arrest the Guises at Amboise, and secure the person of the king. Although this conspiracy was formed with boldness and conducted with secrecy, it was discovered at the moment when about to be put into execution. The Guises punished the conspirators in the most cruel manner, in order to intimidate their enemies, and to prevent them, in future, from forming similar projects.

More than seven hundred Protestants were executed; Condé was made a prisoner, and accused of high treason; he was tried and condemned to death.

During the course of his trial, Antoine, king of Navarre, collected at Guyenne, at the solicitation of his wife and of Coligni, a great number of gentlemen, Protestants as well as Catholics, who were attached to his house. He traversed Gascogne with his army; but on receiving a simple message from the court, while upon the road, he dismissed them all, weeping, and saying: "I must obey, but I will obtain your pardon of the king." "Go and ask pardon for yourself," said an old captain to him, "our safety is in the points of our swords." Thereupon, the nobles who followed him turned back with scorn and indignation.

Antoine continued on his way and arrived at court. There, not sure of his own life, he begged for that of his brother. Every day he waited upon the duke and the Cardinal de Guise, who received him seated and covered, while he was obliged to stand bare-headed in their presence.

All the preparations were made for the death of Condé, when the king, suddenly, fell sick and died. The circumstances and the unexpectedness of this event, together with the inclination of men to believe that the sudden death of princes is not natural, gave rise to a report that Francis II had been poisoned.

His death gave a new turn to affairs. The Prince de Condé was set at liberty; his party began to breathe; the Protestant religion spread more and more; the authority of the Guises was diminished, without, however, falling; Antoine de Navarre recovered a shadow of power, with which he was contented; Mary Stuart was sent back to Scotland; and Catherine de Medici, who then began to play the first part upon this theatre, was declared regent of the kingdom during the minority of Charles IX, her second son.

She found herself lost in a labyrinth of inextricable difficulties, and embarrassed between two religions, and between factions hostile to one another, and contending for sovereign power.

This princess resolved to destroy them by means of their own weapons, if it was possible. She nourished the hatred of the Condés against the Guises; she sowed the seeds of civil war; indifferent and impartial between Geneva and Rome, jealous alone of her own authority.

The Guises, who were zealous Catholics because Condé and Coligni were Protestants, were, for a long time, at the head of the troops. Several battles were fought, and the kingdom was ravaged, at the same time, by three or four armies.

The Constable Anne de Montmorency was killed at the battle of Saint-Denys, in the seventy-fourth year of his age. Francis, duke de Guise, was assassinated by Poltrot, at the siege of Orleans. Henry III, then duke d'Anjou, a great prince in his youth, although a king of little merit in more advanced life, gained the battle of Jarnac against Condé, and that of Moncontour against Coligni.

The conduct of Condé, and his melancholy death at the battle of Jarnac, are too remarkable to be mentioned without some details. He had been wounded in the arm two days before. When on the point of giving battle to his enemy, he had the misfortune to receive a kick from an unruly horse, upon which one of his officers was mounted. The prince, without showing any sign of pain, said to those who were about him: "Gentlemen, learn from this accident that an unruly horse is more dangerous than useful upon the field of battle. Come on," continued he, "the Prince de Condé with a broken leg and a crippled arm, fears not to give battle when you follow him." Success did not correspond with his courage: he lost the battle; all his army was put to rout. His horse having been killed under him, he supported himself as well as he could against a tree, and, although fainting by reason of the pain caused by his wounds, turned his face intrepidly towards the enemy. Montesquiou, captain of the guards of the Duke d'Anjou, passing by while the unfortunate prince was in this condition, asked who he was. Being told that it was the Prince de Condé, he slew him in cold blood.

After the death of Condé, Coligni had upon his shoulders

the whole burden of the party. Jeanne d'Albret, now a widow, confided her son to his care. Young Henry, though only fourteen years of age, went with him to the army, and shared the fatigues of war. Toil and adversity were his guides and masters. His mother and the admiral had nothing else in view than to render their religion independent, in France, of the Church of Rome, and to maintain their own authority against the power of Catherine de Medici.

Catherine was already free from several of her rivals. Francis, duke de Guise, who was the most dangerous and the most hurtful of all, although of the same party, had been assassinated before Orleans. Henry de Guise, his son, who afterwards played so great a part in the world, was then very young.

The Prince de Condé was dead. Charles IX, son of Catherine, had taken the bent which she desired, being blindly submissive to her wishes. The Duke d'Anjou, afterwards Henry III, was absolutely in her interest; she feared no other enemies, save Jeanne d'Albret, Coligni, and the Protestants. She believed that a single blow could destroy them all, and render her power immovable.

She imparted her design to the king, and even to the Duke d'Anjou. All was concerted; and the snares having been prepared, an advantageous peace was proposed to the Protestants. Coligni, tired of civil war, accepted it with eagerness. Charles, in order to leave no subject of suspicion, gave his sister in marriage to young Henry of Navarre. Jeanne d'Albret, deceived by such seductive appearances, came to court with her son and Coligni, and all the Protestant leaders. The marriage was celebrated with splendor: all the civilities, all the professions of friendship, all the oaths, so sacred among men, were lavished by Catherine and the king. The rest of the court were occupied with feasts, games, and masquerades. Finally, on Saint Bartholomew's Day, in the month of August, 1572, the signal was given at midnight. All the houses of the Protestants were forced open at the same moment. The Admiral de Coligni, alarmed by the tumult, sprang from his bed. A troop of assassins entered his chamber; a certain



Lorrainian named Besme, who had been brought up as servant in the house of Guise, was at their head ; he plunged his sword into the breast of the admiral, and gave him a blow upon the face.

Young Henry, duke de Guise, who formed afterwards the Catholic League, and who was subsequently assassinated at Blois, was at Coligni's door, awaiting the assassination, and cried out : " Besme, is it done ? " Immediately afterwards, the assassins cast the body of the admiral out of the window. Coligni fell and expired at the feet of Guise, who stepped upon his body ; not that he was intoxicated with that Catholic zeal for persecution, which, at this time, had infected half of France, but he was led to this act by the spirit of vengeance, which, although not in general so cruel as the false zeal for religion, leads often to still greater baseness.

In the mean time, all the friends of Coligni were attacked in Paris ; men and children were massacred without distinction ; all the streets were filled with dead bodies. Priests, with the crucifix in one hand and the sword in the other, headed the murderers, and encouraged them, in the name of God, to spare neither relatives nor friends.

The Marshal de Tavannes, an ignorant and superstitious soldier, inspired equally by religious fury and party rage, rode about Paris on horseback, crying to the soldiers, " Blood ! blood !—blood-letting is as salutary in the month of August as in the month of May."

The palace of the king was one of the principal scenes of the carnage, for the Prince of Navarre lodged at the Louvre, and all his servants were Protestants. Some were slain in their beds with their wives ; others, flying away naked, were pursued by the soldiers through all the apartments of the palace, and even into the ante-chamber of the king. The young wife of Henry of Navarre, aroused by the frightful tumult, and fearing for her husband and for herself, sprang from her bed, with the intention of casting herself at the feet of the king, her brother. Scarcely had she opened the door of her chamber, when some of her Protestant servants ran into it for safety.

The soldiers entered after them, and pursued them in presence of the princess. One of them, who had concealed himself under the bed, was killed there; two others were slain with halberds at her feet; and the princess herself was covered with blood.

There was a young gentleman, very highly esteemed by the king on account of his noble air, his politeness, and a certain happy faculty which he had for conversation; this was the Count de la Rochefoucauld, great-grandfather of the Marquis de Montendre, who went to England during a persecution less cruel, but equally unjust. La Rochefoucauld had passed the evening with the king in a familiar manner, charming him by the flights of his imagination. The king felt some remorse, and was touched with a sort of compassion for him. Two or three times, he told him not to go home, but to sleep in the royal chamber. La Rochefoucauld replied that he must return to his wife. The king, not pressing him any more, said, "Let him go; I see that God has resolved upon his death." This young man was murdered two hours afterwards.

There were very few who escaped this general massacre. Among these, the deliverance of young La Force is an illustrious example of what men call destiny. He was a child ten years old. His father, his elder brother, and himself were arrested at the same time by the soldiers of the Duke d'Anjou. These murderers fell upon all three tumultuously, striking them at random. The father and children, covered with blood, fell backwards one upon another. The youngest, who had not received a single blow, counterfeited death, and on the following day was delivered from all danger. A life so miraculously preserved, lasted eighty-five years. This was the celebrated Marshal de la Force, uncle of the Duchess de la Force, who is now in England.

Many of these unfortunate victims fled to the river-side. Some attempted, by swimming, to cross over to the faubourg St. Germain. The king perceived them from his window, which opened upon the river; and, what is almost incredible, although too true, he fired upon them with his carabine.

Catherine de Medici, undisturbed, and with a tranquil air, in the midst of this butchery, looked on from the top of a balcony which commanded the city, encouraged the assassins, and laughed to hear the sighs of the dying and the cries of those who were massacred. Her maids of honor went into the streets, with a brazen curiosity worthy of the abominations of that period; they examined the naked body of a gentleman named Soubise, who had been suspected of impotency, and who had just been assassinated under the windows of the queen.

The court, which still reeked with the blood of the nation, tried, some days after, to cover so enormous a crime by the formalities of law. To justify this massacre, they calumniously imputed to the admiral a conspiracy, in which no one believed. The parliament was ordered to proceed against the memory of Coligni: His body was suspended by the feet, with an iron chain, to the gibbet of Montfaucon. The king himself had the cruelty to go and enjoy this horrible spectacle. One of the courtiers advising him to retire, because the body smelt bad, the king replied, "The body of a dead enemy always smells good."

It is impossible to ascertain whether or not the head of the admiral was sent to Rome. It is, however, very certain that there is in the Vatican a picture representing the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, with these words inscribed upon it: "The pope approves of the death of Coligni."

Young Henry of Navarre was spared rather through policy than through compassion on the part of Catherine, who kept him a prisoner until the death of the king, as security for the submission of the Protestants, who were ready to revolt.

Jeanne d'Albret had died suddenly three or four days before. Although her death might have been natural, it is not altogether ridiculous to believe that she was poisoned.

The massacre was not confined to the city of Paris. The same orders of the court were sent to all the governors of the provinces of France. There were but two or three of these governors who refused to obey the orders of the king. One



of them, named Montmorin, governor of Auvergne, wrote to His Majesty the following letter, which deserves to be transmitted to posterity :

“Sire,—I have received an order under the seal of your Majesty, to slay all the Protestants who are in my province. I have too much respect for your Majesty, not to believe that these letters are forged ; and if (which God forbid !) the order has really emanated from yourself, I have still too much respect for you to obey it.”

These massacres carried rage and fear to the hearts of the Protestants. Their irreconcilable hatred seemed to acquire new strength ; the spirit of revenge rendered them more and more terrible.

Not long after, the king was attacked by a strange disease, which carried him off at the end of two years. His blood oozed from every part of his body, even through the pores of his skin. All the art and skill of physicians were directed, without avail, against this incomprehensible malady, which was regarded as an effect of Divine vengeance.

During the sickness of Charles, his brother, the Duke d'Anjou, was elected king of Poland. He owed his elevation to the reputation which he acquired while a general, but which he lost on ascending the throne.

As soon as he heard of the death of Charles, he hastened to France, to take possession of the perilous heritage of a kingdom rent by factions fatal to its sovereigns, and reeking with the blood of its inhabitants. On arriving, he found nothing but divisions and troubles, which continually augmented.

Henry, now king of Navarre, put himself at the head of the Protestants, and gave new life to this party. On the other hand, the young Duke de Guise began to attract the attention of every one by his great and dangerous qualities. He had a mind even more enterprising than his father ; he seemed, moreover, to have a happy opportunity to reach the summit of greatness to which his father had opened for him a path-way.

The Duke d'Anjou, now Henry III, was regarded as incapable of having children, on account of infirmities which resulted from the debaucheries of his youth. The Duke d'Alençon, who had taken the name of the Duke d'Anjou, died in 1584, and Henry of Navarre was the legitimate heir to the crown. Guise tried to secure it for himself, at least after the death of Henry III, and to take it from the house of the Capets, as the Capets had usurped it over the house of Charlemagne, and as the father of Charlemagne had torn it from his legitimate sovereign.

Never did so bold a project appear to have been so well concerted. Henry of Navarre, and all the house of Bourbon, were Protestants. Guise began to conciliate the favor of the nation, by affecting a great zeal for the Catholic religion. His liberality gained the people. The clergy devoted themselves to his service. He had friends in the parliament, spies in the court, and servants throughout the kingdom. His first political scheme was an association under the name of *The Holy League*, against the Protestants, for the security of the Catholic religion.

Half the kingdom entered eagerly into this new confederation. Pope Sixtus V gave his blessing to the League, and protected it as a new army of the Church. Philip II, king of Spain, according to the policy of sovereigns who always concur in the ruin of their neighbors, encouraged the League with all his might, hoping by this means to destroy France, and to enrich himself with the spoils.

Thus, Henry III, always an enemy of the Protestants, was betrayed by the Catholics, besieged by secret and open enemies, and inferior in authority to a subject who, while ostensibly submissive, was in reality more king than himself.

His sole means of relieving himself from this embarrassment was, perhaps, to unite with Henry of Navarre, whose fidelity, courage, and indefatigable spirit were the only barrier that could be opposed to the ambition of Guise, and that could retain all the Protestants in the party of the king.

The king, governed by Guise, whom he distrusted, but whom he dared not to offend, intimidated by the pope, betrayed by his council and by his bad policy, took a totally opposite course: he put himself at the head of the League. In the hope of becoming the master, he joined with Guise, his rebellious subject, against his successor and brother-in-law, whom nature and sound policy marked out as his ally.

Henry of Navarre was, at this time, in command of a small army in Gascony, while a large body of troops was hastening to his succor on the part of the Protestant princes of Germany: he was already upon the frontiers of Lorraine.

The king imagined that he would, at the same time, reduce Henry and get rid of Guise. With this design he sent the Lorrainian with a very small and feeble army against the Germans, by whom he was near being put to rout.

At the same time, he sent against Henry his favorite Joyeuse, with the flower of the French nobility, and with the most powerful army that had been seen since the days of Francis I. He failed in all these designs: Henry of Navarre destroyed this terrible army completely at Coutras, and Guise gained the victory over the Germans.

Henry made use of this victory only to offer a sure peace to the kingdom, and his aid to the king. But, although a conqueror, he saw himself rejected, the king fearing him less than he did his own subjects.

Guise returned victorious to Paris, where he was received as the saviour of the nation. His party became more audacious, and the king more despised; so that Guise seemed rather to have triumphed over the king than over the Germans.

The king, pushed upon all sides, awoke, but too late, from his profound lethargy: he tried to break up the League; he sought to secure some of the most seditious of the citizens; he went so far as to forbid Guise to enter Paris; but he discovered, at his own expense, what it is to command without power. Guise, in spite of his orders, came to Paris; the citizens took up arms; the king's guards were arrested, and he himself imprisoned in his own palace.

It is rare that men are good enough or bad enough. If Guise had undertaken, at this time, to deprive the king of his liberty or his life, he would have been the master of France; but he let him escape, after having beset him, and thus did too much or too little.

Henry III fled to Blois, where he convoked the States-General of the kingdom. They resembled the Parliament of Great Britain as to their convocation; but their operations were different. As they were rarely assembled, they had no rules by which to conduct their business. It was generally an assembly of people incapable, for want of experience, of adopting proper measures, and hence there was mere confusion.

Guise, after driving his sovereign from his capital, dared to brave him at Blois, in the presence of a body which represented the nation. Henry and himself became reconciled in a solemn manner; they went together to the same altar; they there communed together. The one promised by an oath to forget all past injuries, the other to be obedient and faithful for the future; but, at the same time, the king plotted the death of Guise, and Guise the dethronement of the king.

Guise had been sufficiently warned to distrust Henry, but he despised him too much to believe him capable of undertaking an assassination. He was the dupe of his own security; the king had resolved to be revenged both of him and of his brother, Cardinal de Guise, the partner of his ambitious designs, and the boldest promoter of the League. The king himself provided poniards, which he distributed among some Gascons who offered to be the ministers of his vengeance. They slew Guise in the cabinet of the king; but these same men who had slain the duke would not stain their hands with the blood of his brother, because he was a priest and a cardinal; as if the life of a man who wore a long robe and a band was more sacred than that of a man who wore a short coat and a sword!

The king found four men who, according to the Jesuit Maimbourg, being less scrupulous than the Gascons, slew the cardinal for a hundred crowns each. It was under the apartment

of Catherine de Medici that the two brothers were slain; but she was perfectly ignorant of the design of her son, having no longer the confidence of any party, and being abandoned even by the king.

Had this act of vengeance been clothed with the formalities of the law, which are the natural instruments of the justice of kings, or the natural veil of their iniquity, the League would have been alarmed by it; but, wanting this solemn form, this action was regarded as a frightful assassination, and served only to irritate the party. The blood of the Guises fortified the League, as the death of Coligni had fortified the Protestants. Several cities of France revolted openly against the king.

He came first to Paris, but found all its gates shut, and all its inhabitants under arms.

The famous Duke de Mayenne, younger brother of the late Duke de Guise, was now in Paris. He had been eclipsed by the glory of Guise during his life; but, after the death of Guise, the king found the Duke de Mayenne as dangerous an enemy as his brother: the former had all the great qualities of the latter, without the lustre of his name.

The party of the Lorraines was very numerous in Paris. The great name of Guise, their magnificence, their liberality, their apparent zeal for the Catholic religion, had made them the favorites of the city. Priests, citizens, women, magistrates, united earnestly with Mayenne in seeking a vengeance which seemed to them legitimate.

The widow of the duke brought before parliament a suit against the murderers of her husband. The process began according to the usual course of justice: two councillors were named to inquire into the circumstances of the crime; but the parliament went no further, the leaders being singularly attached to the interests of the king.

The Sorbonne did not follow this example of moderation; seventy doctors published an opinion, in which they declared that Henry of Valois had forfeited his right to the crown, and that his subjects were no longer bound by their oath of fidelity



But the royal authority had no enemies more dangerous than those citizens of Paris named the Sixteen, not on account of their number, as they were forty, but on account of the sixteen quarters of Paris into which they divided the government. The most considerable of all these citizens was a certain Le Clere, who had usurped the great name of Bussy. He was a bold citizen and a bad soldier, like all his companions. These Sixteen had acquired an absolute authority, and, in the end, became as insupportable to Mayenne as they had been terrible to the king.

Besides, the priests, who have always been the trumpets of all revolutions, thundered from their pulpits, and announced, in the name of God, that he who killed the tyrant would certainly enter paradise. The sacred and fearful names of Jehu and Judith, and all the assassinations consecrated by Holy Writ, were sounded upon the ears of the nation. In this frightful extremity, the king was at last forced to implore the aid of that same Henry of Navarre whom he had formerly spurned. This prince was more sensible to the glory of protecting his brother-in-law, and his king, than to the victory which he had achieved over him.

He led his army to the king; but before his troops had arrived, visited him, accompanied by a single page. The king was astonished by this trait of generosity, of which he himself would have been incapable. Both then marched against Paris, at the head of a powerful army. The city was not in a condition to defend itself. The League was on the verge of total ruin, when a young monk of the order of Saint Dominick changed the whole face of things.

His name was Jacques Clement; he was born in a village of Burgundy, called Sorbonne, and now twenty-four years of age. His stern piety, his dark and melancholy spirit, permitted him to be led into fanaticism by the ceaseless clamors of the priests. He took it upon himself to be the liberator and the martyr of the Holy League. He communicated his project to his friends and his superiors; all encouraged him, and canonized him in advance. Clement prepared

himself for the work of a parricide by fasts, and continual prayers during entire nights. He confessed, received the sacrament, then bought a good knife. He went to St. Cloud, to the apartments of the king, and asked to be presented to this prince, under the pretext of revealing a secret which it was very important that he should know immediately. Having been conducted to his majesty, he bowed modestly, and gave to him a letter, which he said had been written by Achille de Harlay, first president. While the king was reading, the monk struck him in the belly, and left the knife in the wound; then, with a serene look, and with his hands folded upon his breast, he raised his eyes to heaven, and peacefully awaited the consequences of his horrible deed. The king arose, tore the knife from the wound, and struck the murderer with it upon the forehead. Several of the courtiers hastened to his side on hearing the noise. Their duty was simply to arrest the monk, in order to interrogate him and discover his accomplices; but they slew him upon the spot, with a precipitation which caused them to be suspected of having known his design. Henry of Navarre, was now king of France by the right of birth, recognized by one portion of the army, and abandoned by the other.

The Duke d'Epernon, and some others, quitted the army, alleging that they were too good Catholics to take up arms in favor of a king who did not go to mass. They hoped secretly that the overturning of the kingdom, the object of their desires, would give them an opportunity to render themselves sovereigns in their country.

In the mean time, the crime of Clement was approved at Rome, and this monk was adored in Paris. The Holy League, in order to show the world that it was not the house of Bourbon but the heretics they hated, recognized as their king the Cardinal de Bourbon, an old priest, and uncle of Henry IV.

The Duke de Mayenne was too wise to usurp the title of king; nevertheless, he possessed all the royal authority, while the unfortunate Cardinal de Bourbon, called king by the League, was kept a prisoner by Henry IV during the remain-

der of his life, which lasted two more years. The League, supported more than ever by the pope, assisted by the Spaniards, and strong of itself, had reached the height of its grandeur, and was causing Henry IV to feel the hatred inspired by false zeal, and the contempt produced by success.

Henry had but few friends, few important places, no money, and a small army; but his courage, his activity, his policy made up for all that he lacked. He gained many battles, and among others that of Ivry, over the Duke de Mayenne, one of the most remarkable ever fought. The two generals, on this occasion, showed all their skill, and the soldiers all their courage. Few faults were committed on either side. Henry was, finally, indebted for the victory to the superiority of his knowledge and his valor; but he confessed that Mayenne had sustained himself like a great general: "He erred," said he, "only in the cause which he supported."

He showed himself, after the victory, as moderate as he had been terrible in the combat. Knowing that power is often diminished by too great a use of it, and augmented by employing it with prudence, he checked the fury of his soldiers, took good care of the wounded enemy, and set many of the prisoners at liberty. So much valor and so much generosity made, however, no impression upon the Leaguers.

The civil wars of France became the quarrel of all Europe. King Philip II earnestly defended the League: Queen Elizabeth gave all sorts of succor to Henry, not because he was a Protestant, but because he was an enemy of Philip II, the growth of whose power was dangerous to her. She sent to Henry five thousand men, under the command of her favorite, the Earl of Essex, whose head she afterwards cut off.

The king continued the war with varied success. He took by assault all the suburbs of Paris in a single day. He might, perhaps, have taken the city itself, if he had merely thought of conquering it, but he feared to give his capital as a prey to the soldiers, and to ruin a city which he desired to save. He besieged Paris; he raised the siege; he recommenced it; finally, he invested the city and cut off all communication with it, in



the hope that the Parisians would be forced, by want of provisions, to surrender without the effusion of blood.

But Mayenne, the priests, and the Sixteen, influenced all the citizens with so much art, envenomed them so strongly against the heretics, and filled their imagination with so much fanaticism, that they preferred to die of hunger rather than surrender and obey.

The monks and other religious presented a spectacle which, while ridiculous in itself, was a wonderful means of animating the people. They performed a sort of military review, marching by rank and file, and wearing rusty armor over their habits, having at their head the figure of the Virgin Mary, brandishing their swords, and crying out that they were ready to fight and die in defence of the faith. The citizens seeing their confessors thus armed, believed that they were actually maintaining the cause of God.

The scarcity of provisions soon became a general famine: the citizens had no other nourishment than the sermons of the priests and the imaginary miracles of the monks, who, by this pious artifice, contrived to have every thing in abundance in their convents, while the whole city was on the point of dying with hunger. The wretched Parisians, deceived, at first, by the hope of prompt relief, went about the streets singing ballads and lampoons against Henry: a folly which could not, with any semblance to truth, be attributed to any other nation, but which is perfectly characteristic of the French, even in so frightful a condition. This short and deplorable joy was soon entirely suppressed by the most real and astonishing misery: thirty thousand men died of hunger in the space of one month. The miserable citizens, pressed by the famine, tried to make a sort of bread from the bones of the dead, which being broken and boiled, formed a sort of jelly; but this unnatural nourishment served only to hasten their death. It is related (and this is attested by unimpeachable witnesses) that one woman killed and eat her own child.<sup>1</sup> But the inflexible

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<sup>1</sup> This forms an episode in the Tenth Canto.

obstinacy of the Parisians was equal to their sufferings. Henry had more compassion for their condition than they had for themselves. His good nature led him to act in opposition to his private interest.

He permitted his soldiers to sell privately all sorts of provisions in the city. Thus happened what was never before seen,—the besieged fed by the besiegers. It was a strange spectacle to see soldiers in the bottom of their trenches sending provisions to their enemies, who, in return, threw money to them from their ramparts. Officers, led away by the licentiousness so common among soldiers, would exchange a loin of beef for a damsel, so that it was not unusual to see women descending in buckets, and buckets ascending laden with provisions. Thus an unseasonable freedom reigned among the officers; the soldiers amassed a great deal of money, the besieged were comforted, and the king lost the city; for, while these things were going on, an army of Spaniards arrived from the Low Countries. The king was obliged to raise the siege, and encounter all the dangers and hazards of the battle-field. The Spaniards having been driven from the kingdom, he returned a third time before Paris, which refused still more obstinately to receive him.

In the mean time, the Cardinal de Bourbon, that phantom of royalty, died. An assembly held in Paris convoked the States-General for the purpose of electing a new king. Spain here exercised a great influence: Mayenne had a large party who wished to put him upon the throne. Finally, Henry, weary of the cruel necessity of making eternal war on his own subjects, and knowing, moreover, that it was not his person, but his religion, that they hated, resolved to return into the bosom of the Church of Rome. A few weeks afterwards, Paris opened its gates. What had been impossible to his valor and his magnanimity, he obtained easily by going to mass, and receiving the pope's absolution.

In God's own name, by whom all monarchs reign,  
He enters Paris: while the Leaguer train  
Bow submissive. E'en the meddling priests

Are dumb ; and all around, with jocund feasts  
And cries of joy, the vaulted heavens ring,  
And hail at once a conqueror, father, king.  
Henceforth all nations own'd his regal state,  
'Too soon determined, as begun too late.  
The Austrian trembled ; and by Rome approved,  
In Henry's virtues was his Rome beloved.  
Discord was exiled from Lutitia's shore,  
And Mayenne brave, a rebel now no more,  
Himself his province in subjection brings,  
The best of subjects to the best of kings.



# THE HENRIADE.

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## CANTO I.

## THE ARGUMENT.

Henry III, joined by Henry de Bourbon, king of Navarre, against the League, having blockaded Paris, sends Henry de Bourbon privately to England, in hopes of obtaining succors from Queen Elizabeth. A violent storm overtaking him in his voyage, he is obliged to put into an island, where an old hermit receives him, and foretells his change of religion, and accession to the throne.—Description of England and its government.

# THE HENRIADE.

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## CANTO THE FIRST.

THE chief renown'd, who ruled in France, I sing,  
By right of conquest, and of birth, a king ;  
In various sufferings resolute, and brave,  
Faction he quell'd ; he conquer'd and forgave ;  
Subdued the dangerous League, and factious Mayne,  
And curb'd the head-strong arrogance of Spain.  
He taught those realms he conquer'd to obey ;  
And made his subjects happy by his sway.

O heaven-born Truth, descend ; celestial Muse,  
Thy power, thy brightness, in my verse infuse.  
Let kings attentive hear thy voice divine ;  
To teach the monarchs of mankind, is thine.  
'Tis thine, to war-enkindled realms to show  
What dire effects from curst divisions flow.  
Relate the troubles of preceding times ;  
The people's sufferings, and the prince's crimes.  
And oh ! if fable may her succors lend,  
And with thy voice her softer accents blend ;  
If on thy light her shades sweet graces shed,  
If her fair hand e'er deck'd thy sacred head,  
Let her with me through all thy limits rove,  
Not to conceal thy beauties, but improve.



Valois<sup>1</sup> then govern'd the distracted land ;  
 Loose flow'd the reins of empire in his hand :  
 Rights were confounded, laws neglected bore  
 No force, for Valois rather reign'd no more.  
 No more the prince for deeds of war<sup>2</sup> renown'd,  
 Whom, as her son victorious, conquest own'd ;  
 Whose arms through Europe spread disorder'd fear,  
 Whose loyal subjects shed the pious tear,  
 When the bleak North proclaim'd him truly great,  
 And laid her crowns and sceptres at his feet.<sup>3</sup>  
 Those rays of glory, erst in battle won,  
 No longer, now, illumed that monarch's throne.  
 There indolently, in inglorious ease,  
 Reclined he fondly in the arms of peace :  
 Too weak to bear, e'en for a single hour,  
 The regal diadem and weight of power.  
 Voluptuous youths usurp'd the sole command,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Henry III, king of France, one of the principal personages in this poem, is here always called Valois, the name of the royal branch to which he belonged.

<sup>2</sup> Henry III (Valois), while duke d'Anjou, commanded the armies of Charles IX, his brother, against the Protestants, and gained, at the age of eighteen, the battles of Jarnac and Moncontour.

<sup>3</sup> The Duke d'Anjou was elected king of Poland through the instrumentality of Jean de Montluc, bishop of Valence, ambassador of France to Poland ; he went there very reluctantly to receive the crown ; but having heard, in 1574, of the death of his brother, he did not delay his return to France (1741).

<sup>4</sup> Quélus and Saint-Mégrin, Joyeuse and d'Epéron ; they were called the minions of Henry III. Saint-Luc, Livarot, Villequier, Duguast, and Maugiron, shared also his favor and his debauches. It is certain that he had for Quélus a passion capable of the greatest excess. In his early youth, he was reproached for his tastes : he had had a very equivocal friendship for that same Duke de Guise whom he afterwards caused to be slain at Blois. Doctor Boucher, in his book, *De justa Henrici tertii abdicatione*, dares to say that the hatred of Henry III for the Cardinal de Guise had no other foundation than the repulses that he had received from him in his youth ; but this story resembles all the other calumnies with which the book of Boucher is filled.

Henry III, in the society of his minions, mingled religion with debauch-

And reign'd, in truth, the sovereigns of the land.  
 Pleased in their soft luxurious prince to find  
 Corrupted morals, and a girlish mind.  
 Meantime the Guises rose at fortune's call ;

ery. With them he made retreats and performed pilgrimages, and took the discipline. He instituted the Brotherhood of Death, either for the death of one of his pets, or for that of the Princess de Condé, his mistress: the capucins and minims were the directors of the Brothers, among whom he admitted a few of the citizens of Paris. These brothers were dressed in a robe of bolting-cloth, with a cowl. In another and quite different brotherhood, that of the White Penitents, he admitted his courtiers only. He believed, like certain theologians of his time, that these mummeries expiated habitual sins. It is held that the statutes of these brothers, their dress, their manners, were emblems of his amours, and that the poet Desportes, abbé de Tryon, one of the shrewdest courtiers of that day, explained them in a book which he afterwards threw into the fire.

Henry III lived in all the effeminacy and primness of a coquettish female: he slept in gloves made of a particular skin, in order to preserve the beauty of his hands, which were, in fact, more beautiful than those of any of the women of his court; he put upon his face a prepared paste, and over this a sort of mask. It is thus that he is spoken of in the book entitled *Hermaphrodites*, which gives minute details concerning his sleeping, his rising, and his dressing. He had a scrupulous exactitude in regard to neatness in dress: so attached was he to these petty things, that he one day sent the Duke d'Epéron from his presence, because he appeared before him without white slippers and in an ill-buttoned garb.

<sup>1</sup> Quélus was killed in a duel, April 27, 1578.

Louis de Maugiron, baron d'Ampus, was one of the minions for whom Henry III had the greatest fondness: he was a young man of great courage and of great promise. He performed some very handsome feats at the siege of Issouire, where he had the misfortune to lose an eye. This accident still left him sufficient charms for the taste of the king. He was compared to the Princess d'Eboli, who, being half blind like himself, was at the same time mistress of Philip II, king of Spain. It is said that it was for this princess and for Maugiron that an Italian made these four beautiful lines, borrowed from the Greek anthology:

"Lumine Acon dextro, capta est Leonida sinistro,  
 Et poterat forma vincere uterque deos:  
 Parve puer, lumen quod habes concede puellæ;  
 Sic tu cæcus Amor, sic erit illa Venus."

Maugiron was killed while backing Quélus in his quarrel.

Paul Stuart de Caussade de Saint-Mégrin, a gentleman from the vicinity of Bordeaux, was beloved by Henry III as much as Quélus and Maugiron, and died in as tragical a manner. He was assassinated on the 21st of July,

And built their schemes of greatness on his fall.  
 Thence sprang the League, which proved the fatal source  
 Of numerous ills, and baffled all his force.  
 The servile crowd, with vain chimeras fed,  
 Too blindly follow'd where the tyrants led.  
 Then from his ease was Valois forced to fly,  
 No faithful friend, no kind protector nigh.  
 All had been lost, but warlike<sup>1</sup> Bourbon came,  
 Whose generous soul was fired with virtue's flame.

of the same year, in the street St. Honoré, while returning to the Louvre, about eleven o'clock in the evening. He was carried to the same hotel de Boissy, where his two friends had died; and there, on the next day, died of four-and-thirty wounds which he had received the night before. The Duke de Guise, the Balafre, was suspected of this assassination, because Saint-Mégrin had boasted of having slept with the Duchess de Guise. The Memoirs of the times relate that the Duke de Mayenne was recognized among the assassins by his large beard, and by his hand shaped like a shoulder of mutton. The Duke de Guise had not, however, the reputation of being strict in regard to the conduct of his wife; and there is no reason for believing that the Duke de Mayenne, who was never guilty of a mean action, would disgrace himself so much as to mingle in a crowd of twenty assassins in order to kill a single man.

The king kissed Saint-Mégrin, Quélus, and Maugiron, after their death, caused them to be shaved, and preserved their blond locks. With his own hand, he detached the rings which he himself had fastened in the ears of Quélus. M. de l'Estoile says that these three minions died without a particle of religion: Maugiron in blaspheming; Quélus in crying out incessantly, "Ah! my king, my king!" *but not a single word concerning Jesus Christ or the Virgin.* They were buried at Saint Paul's; in which church the king caused three marble tombs to be erected, upon which they were represented in a kneeling posture. These tombs were covered with Latin and French epitaphs, in prose and verse. In them, Maugiron was compared to Horatius Cocles and to Hannibal, because like these heroes, he was partially blind. These epitaphs are not reproduced here, although they are to be found only in the *Antiquités de Paris*, printed under the reign of Henry III. There is nothing remarkable nor particularly good in them; the best is the epitaph upon the tomb of Quélus:

"Non injuriam, sed mortem patienter tulit."

"He could not bear e'en insult's breath  
 Yet patiently could suffer death."

On Joyeuse, see notes to the third canto.

<sup>1</sup> Henry IV, the hero of this poem, is here indifferently called Bourbon or Henry. He was born at Pau, in Bearn, December 13, 1553.

'Twas his, the royal sacrifice to save,  
And prove the feeble monarch to be brave.  
The kings to Paris with their troops advance,  
While all the eyes of Europe turn to France.  
Rome takes the alarm, her fears the Spaniards share,  
And wait with dread the issue of the war.

High on the walls inhuman Discord stood,  
Eager for slaughter, and athirst for blood ;  
Through all the city raged, nor raged in vain,  
But drove to arms the hostile League, and Mayne ;  
Through Church and State her deadly poison spread,  
And call'd the proud Iberia to her aid.  
The savage monster scenes of horror loves,  
And plagues the votaries whom her soul approves.  
Fain to her torments she could wish consign'd,  
Not only France, but all of human kind.  
Westward of Paris, where the winding Seine  
Adorns each meadow with eternal green,  
Where oft the Graces and the Muses play,  
The troops of Valois form in dread array.  
There, whom religion sway'd by different laws,  
Revenge united in their sovereign's cause.  
A thousand chiefs stood forth at Bourbon's word ;  
Love join'd their hearts, and valor drew the sword.  
With joy they trod the splendid paths of fame,  
But one their leader, and their church the same.

Immortal<sup>1</sup> Louis eyed him from above  
With all the fondness of parental love ;  
Virtues he saw, which Gallia's king might grace,

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<sup>1</sup> Saint Louis, the ninth of that name, king of France, from whom the Bourbon branch descended.

And future glories worthy of his race.  
Charm'd by his courage, with prophetic glance,  
He call'd him to the throne of wretched France ;  
Nor stopp'd his favors here : Heaven's purest light,  
Drove from his mind the shades of Error's night.  
Thus valiant Henry gain'd the regal crown,  
By paths mysterious to himself unknown.  
Louis was present from his blest abode,  
To urge the youthful hero on his road.  
And all unseen the kind assistance came,  
That toils and dangers might augment his fame.

Already had been seen, in awful rage  
Of doubtful war, the embattled ranks engage.  
Already o'er the plains had carnage spread,  
With desolating hand, her heaps of dead,  
When Valois thus to faithful Bourbon spoke,  
Mid sighs and tears that oft his utterance broke.

“See to what height thy monarch's ills are grown,  
There read the faithful portrait of thy own.  
With equal hate the factious Leaguers join  
To strike at Bourbon's glory, and at mine.  
Seditious Paris, with a proud disdain,  
Rejects the present and the future reign.  
The ties of blood, the laws, each generous care  
That fills thy soul, proclaim thee lawful heir.  
Great are thy virtues, and, I blush to own,  
For this would Paris drive thee from the throne ;  
Nay more, to show that heaven approves the deed,  
Religion heaps her curses on thy head ;<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Henry IV, king of Navarre, was solemnly excommunicated by Pope Sixtus V in 1585, three years before the events here related. The pope,



Rome, without armies, distant nations awes,  
 While Spain her thunder hurls, asserts her cause.  
 Friends, subjects, kindred, in this evil day,  
 Or basely fly, or proudly disobey.  
 Rich is the harvest of Iberia's gains,  
 Who pours her legions on my desert plains.  
 Perchance, the succors of a foreign force  
 May stop the impending danger in its course.  
 Britannia's queen may lend the friendly aid,  
 And mutual terror may our foes invade.  
 What though eternal jealousy and pride  
 Oppose our interest, and our hearts divide ;  
 When vile affronts have made my honor poor,  
 My subjects, and my country, are no more,  
 Who comes these proud insulters to control,  
 Is most my friend, and dearest to my soul.  
 No common, listless agent will I trust ;  
 Be thou my envoy in a cause so just.  
 On thee my fortune in the war depends,  
 Thy merit only can procure me friends."

Thus Valois spoke, and Bourbon heard with grief  
 The new designs and counsels of the chief.  
 His great and generous mind disdain'd to yield,  
 And thus divide the glory of the field.  
 There was a time when conquest met his arm,

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in his bull, calls him *a detestable bastard of the house of Bourbon* ; deprives him, and all the house of Condé, forever, of all their domains and fiefs, and declares them especially incapable of succeeding to the crown.

Although the King of Navarre and the Prince de Condé were, at that time, in arms at the head of the Protestants, the parliament, always anxious to preserve the honor and the liberties of the State, remonstrated earnestly against this bull ; and Henry caused a proclamation to be made in Rome, at the door of the Vatican, that Sixtus V, a self-styled pope, had lied, and was a heretic himself, etc.

And his those honors which the brave can charm ;  
 When strong in power, unaided by intrigue,  
 Himself by Condé's<sup>1</sup> side, appall'd the League.  
 Yet, in obedience to the king's command,  
 He left his laurels and withdrew his hand.  
 The troops, amazed, with restless ardor burn,  
 Their fate, their fortune waiting his return.  
 The absent hero still preserved his fame,  
 The guilty city shudder'd at his name ;  
 Each moment thought the mighty warrior near,  
 With death and desolation in his rear.

He through the plains of Neustria bends his way,  
 Attended only by his friend Mornay.<sup>2</sup>  
 From whose just lips no word of flattery fell,  
 Too good alas ! in Error's camp to dwell.

<sup>1</sup> This was Henri, prince de Condé, son of Louis, who was killed at Jarnac. Henri de Condé was the hope of the Protestant party. He died at Saint-Jean-d'Angely, in 1585, at the age of thirty-five years. His wife, Charlotte de la Trimouille, was accused of his death. She was three months gone with child when her husband died ; and six months afterwards was delivered of Henri de Condé, second of the name, whom a popular and ridiculous tradition represented to have been born thirteen months after the death of his father.

Larrey has adopted this tradition in his *History of Louis XIV.*—a history in which style, truth, and good sense are equally neglected.

<sup>2</sup> Duplessis-Mornay, the greatest and most virtuous man of the Protestant party, was born at Buy, November 5, 1549. He knew perfectly the Latin and Greek languages, and was also well acquainted with the Hebrew, which was unusual among gentlemen in those days. He served his religion and his master both by means of his pen and his sword. He it was whom Henry IV, while yet king of Navarre, sent to Elizabeth, queen of England. He had no other instructions from his master than a blank signature. He succeeded in almost all his negotiations, because he was a true politician and not an intriguer. His letters are said to be written with much vigor and wisdom.

When Henry IV changed his religion, Mornay reproached him in the severest terms, and retired from his court. He was called the Pope of the Huguenots. All that is said of his character in the poem is conformable with history.



By zeal and prudence studious to advance  
 Alike the interest of his Church and France.  
 The courtier's censor, but at court beloved,  
 Rome's greatest foe, and yet by Rome approved.

Between two rocks, which hoary ocean laves,  
 And beats with all the fury of his waves,  
 The port of Dieppe meets the hero's eyes,  
 And for him eager mariners supplies.  
 Their hands prepare the vessels for the main,  
 Those sovereign rulers of the azure plain,  
 And stormy Boreas, fast-enchain'd in air,  
 Leaves the smooth sea to softer Zephyr's care.  
 Their anchor weigh'd, the chieftains quit the strand,  
 And soon descry Britannia's happy land.

When lo! the day's bright star is hid in clouds,  
 And gathering whirlwinds whistle through the shrouds;  
 Heaven gives her thunder, waves on waves arise,  
 And floods of lightning burst from angry skies;  
 Death now his form upon the billow rears,  
 And on the stricken sailors fiercely glares.  
 Nor death nor dangers Bourbon's soul annoy,  
 His country's sorrows all his cares employ;

The author's reason for giving Mornay a place in the poem, is the philosophic character that belonged to him alone, and which is developed in the eighth canto:

"The king alone employ'd his generous thought;  
 For his defence the imbattled field he sought;  
 Detested war, and, singularly brave,  
 Could death confront, though death he never gave."

Again in the sixth canto:

"War was heaven's scourge on man, he wisely thought,  
 Nor loved the task, but took it as his lot;  
 E'en for the wonders of his sword he grieved,  
 And loathed it for the glories it achieved."

— For her he casts the longing look behind,  
The storm accuses and condemns the wind.  
Less generous warmth the Roman's<sup>1</sup> breast inspired,  
By love of conquest and ambition fired,  
When launching boldly from Epirus' coast,  
By angry seas and furious tempests tost,  
He dared his mightier fortune to oppose  
To all the power of Neptune, and his foes ;  
Firm, and convinced, that no impending doom  
Could snatch its monarch from the world, and Rome.

'Twas then that Being, infinitely wise,  
At whose command all empires fall or rise,  
Who gave this world its fair and beauteous form,  
Who calms the ocean, and directs the storm,  
On Gallia's hero look'd with pity down,  
From the bright radiance of His sapphire throne.  
The waves, obedient to His dread command,  
Convey'd the vessel to the neighboring land.  
Guided by Heaven, secure the hero stood  
Where Jersey's isle emerges from the flood.

Near to the shore there lay a calm retreat,  
By shades defended from the solar heat ;  
A rock, that hid the fury of the seas,  
Forbid the entrance of each ruder breeze ;  
By Nature's hand adorn'd, a mossy grot  
Improved the beauties of this rural spot.  
A holy hermit, train'd in wisdom's ways,

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<sup>1</sup> Julius Cæsar being in Epirus, in the city of Apollonia, now Ceres, secretly withdrew, and embarked upon the little river Bolinæus, which was then called the Anius. During the night, he entered a twelve-oared bark, in order to join his troops which were in the kingdom of Naples. He encountered a furious tempest. (See Plutarch.)

There spent the quiet evening of his days.  
Lost to the world, and all it's trifling show,  
His only study was himself to know.  
His peaceful mind would dwell on any thought,  
By holy love adduced, or pleasure brought.  
The flowery meadows, and the silver streams,  
Had raised his soul to most ennobling themes.  
Each passion quell'd in this retired abode,  
His ardent wish was union with his God.  
Wisdom before him spread her ample page,  
And heaven protected his declining age;  
She pour'd her purest blessings on his head,  
And taught him Fate's mysterious book to read.  
Scarce does the hoary sage the strangers view,  
Than, taught by God, the prince he straightway knew;  
Near to a crystal stream he bids him taste  
The simple food that made his rural feast.  
And oft had Henry flown from pomp, and care,  
To humble cottages, and simple fare;  
Had bid adieu to courts, and courtly pride,  
And laid the pomp of majesty aside.

In plain and useful converse much was said  
Of troubles through the Christian empire spread.  
Mornay unmoved, determined to protect,  
With zealous fervor, Calvin and his sect.  
Henry, in doubt what precepts to believe,  
Petition'd Heaven one ray of light to give.  
"Error," he said, "in all preceding times,  
Has truth conceal'd, and been the nurse of crimes.  
Must I then wander, and mistake the road,  
Whose only confidence is placed in God?  
A God, so gracious, will afford that light,  
Which man requires to worship Him aright."

“Let us,” replied the venerable seer,  
“God’s secret counsels and designs revere.  
Nor rashly think, that human errors bring  
Their muddy currents from so pure a spring.  
Well I remember, when these aged eyes  
Beheld this sect in humble weakness rise,  
When, as an exile dreading human sight,  
It fled for refuge to the shades of night.  
By slow degrees the phantom raised her head,  
And all around her baleful influence shed.  
Placed on the throne, no power her force confines,  
She reigns our tyrant, and o’erturns our shrines.  
Far from the court, in this obscure retreat,  
With sighs and tears I weep Religion’s fate.  
One hope remains to cheer life’s dreary vale :  
So strange a worship cannot long prevail ;  
First sprung from man, and founded in caprice,  
It’s new-born glory in our days shall cease.  
Frail, like ourselves, all human works decay ;  
God sweeps their glory and their pride away.  
Immovable, His holy city stands ;  
Nor dreads the malice of our mortal hands.  
In vain the fabric hell and time invade ;  
His own right arm the strong foundation laid.  
On thee, great Bourbon, will He pour His light,  
And chase the mists of error from thy sight.  
On Valois’ throne, with Providence thy shield,  
Bright wilt thou shine, and all thy foes shall yield.  
Through paths of glory conquest leads thy sword :  
’Tis Heaven’s decree ; ’tis the Almighty’s word.  
Yet hope not rashly, in the pride of youth,  
To enter Paris, uninspired by truth.  
But most, of love’s bewitching draught beware,  
The bravest hearts are conquer’d by the fair.

From that sweet poison guard thy manly soul ;  
Though passion call, and pleasure crown the bowl.  
And when, at length, this sage advice pursued,  
The factious Leaguers and thyself subdued,  
In horrid siege thy bounteous hand shall give  
Life to a nation, and its strength revive ;  
Then all thy realms shall taste the sweets of peace,  
All strife shall vanish, and all discord cease.  
Then raise thine eyes to that Almighty Lord,  
Whom erst thy fathers honor'd and adored.  
Who most preserves His image, most shall find  
That virtue pleases, and that Heaven is kind."

Thus spoke the seer. Each word new warmth bestow'd ;  
And Henry's soul with secret raptures glow'd.  
Those happy days were present to his eyes,  
When God, to man, descended from the skies ;  
When Virtue open'd all her sacred springs,  
Pronounced her oracles, and govern'd kings.  
With tears he clasp'd the hermit to his breast,  
And parting sighs his honest grief exprest.  
Far distant scenes creative fancy drew,  
And rising glories dawn'd upon his view.  
Marks of surprise were stamp'd on Mornay's face,  
But Heaven from him withheld her gifts of grace.  
The world, in vain, bestows the name of wise,  
Where Virtue beams, but Error's clouds arise.

While thus the sage, enlighten'd from above,  
Spoke to the heart, and tried the prince to move,  
Charm'd with his voice the listening Winds subside,  
Phœbus breaks forth, and Ocean smoothes the tide.  
By him conducted, Bourbon reach'd the shore,  
And prosperous gales the chief to Albion bore.

With joy he views the sea-encircled isle,  
Refulgent now with kindly Fortune's smile.  
Here public evils whilom owed their cause  
To long abuses of the wisest laws ;  
Here many a warrior fell, of high renown ;  
And now upon the oft-times tottering throne,  
A woman's hand the regal sceptre sway'd,  
And Fate itself her sovereign power obey'd.  
'Tis wise Eliza, whose directing hand  
Holds the great scale of Europe at command,  
And rules a people, that alike disdain  
Or freedom's ease, or slavery's iron chain.  
Her subjects now forget their former ills ;  
Their flocks unnumber'd browse the peaceful hills ;  
Corn fills their plains, and fruitage loads their trees ;  
Sovereigns on land, and monarchs of the seas,  
From pole to pole their gallant navies sweep  
The waters of the tributary deep.  
On Thames's banks each flower of genius thrives,  
There sports the Muse, and Mars his thunder gives.  
Three different powers at Westminster<sup>1</sup> appear,  
And all admire the ties which join them there.  
Whom interest parts, the laws together bring,  
The people's deputies, the peers, and king :  
The sacred members of that mighty frame,  
Itself a danger, though all else it tame.  
Thrice happy times, when grateful subjects show  
That loyal, warm affection from them due !  
But happier still, when freedom's blessings spring  
From the wise conduct of a prudent king.

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<sup>1</sup> The English parliament assembled at Westminster. The concurrence of the House of Commons, and of the Lords, with the consent of the king, is necessary to make a law.



"Oh, when," cried Bourbon, ravish'd at the sight,  
"In France, shall peace and glory thus unite?  
A female hand has closed the gates of war!  
Look on, ye monarchs! and adopt her care.  
Your nations, Discord's horrid tide o'erwhelms;  
She lives the blessing of adoring realms."

Now at that thriving city he arrives,  
Where, nursed by heaven-born Freedom, Plenty lives.  
Now, mighty William's<sup>1</sup> tower before him rears,  
And now Eliza's stately home appears.  
Thither he speeds, attended by Mornay,  
His friend, and sole associate in the way.  
True heroes scorn that pageantry and state,  
Whose glittering honors captivate the great.  
For France he supplicates with humble prayers,  
And native dignity each accent bears.  
From honest frankness all his periods flow,  
The only eloquence that soldiers know.  
"Does Valois send you to the banks of Thames?"  
Eliza cries, surprised at Valois' name.  
"Are all your dire contentions at an end?  
Are you, that bitterest enemy, his friend?  
Fame spread your discords, and that Fame was true,  
From north to south, from Ganges to Peru.  
And does that arm, so dreaded in the fight,  
Protect his honor, and maintain his right?"

"Distress," replied the chief, "hath heal'd our hate,  
And triumphs now great Valois' arms await.

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<sup>1</sup> The Tower of London is an old castle on the Thames, built by William the Conqueror, duke of Normandy.

Far happier days his lot it were to see,  
Had he but trusted to his arm and me.  
But fears unmanly in his breast arose ;  
'Twas art and cowardice that made us foes.  
Henceforth the vanquish'd I will aid to live,  
Avenge his wrongs, and all his faults forgive.  
This war so just may raise Britannia's fame,—  
'Tis thine, great queen, to signalize her name.  
Let royal mercy spread her downy wings,  
And crown thy virtues by defending kings."

The queen, impatient, asks him to relate  
What ruthless evils harass'd Gallia's state.  
What springs of action had produced a change  
At once so new, so pleasing, and so strange.  
"Full oft of bloody broils," Eliza said,  
"Through Britain's isle has fame the rumor spread.  
But who for certainty on fame depends,  
Which light with darkness, truth with falsehood blends ;  
From you, or Valois' friend, or conquering foe,  
Those long dissensions I could wish to know.  
Yourself was witness, and can best impart  
What mystic ties have changed so brave a heart.  
Display your martial deeds, your griefs declare,  
No life more worthy of a royal ear."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Those who do not approve of this supposed voyage of Henry IV to England, may say that the author is not at liberty thus to mingle falsehood with truth in so recent a reign ; that those acquainted with the history of France must be shocked by it, and the ignorant led into error ; that if fictions may be admitted into an epic poem, the reader ought to be able to recognize them easily as such ; that when one personifies the passions, paints Politics and Discord going from Rome to Paris, or Love enchaining Henry IV, etc., nobody is deceived by these pictures ; but that, when Henry IV is represented crossing the sea to ask assistance of a princess of his own religion, one may easily believe that this prince really made the

"And must I, then," return'd the chief, with sighs,  
 "Recall those scenes of horror to my eyes !  
 Oh, would to heaven oblivion's endless night,  
 With thickest shades, might veil them from my sight !  
 Must Bourbon of his kindred, then, proclaim  
 Crimes which so oft have burn'd his cheeks with shame ?

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voyage ; that, in a word, such an episode must be regarded less as a creation of the poet than as a lie of the historian.

Those who are of a contrary opinion may say, that a poet is not only at liberty to alter history in the principal facts, but that it is impossible not to do so ; that an event was never in the world so disposed by chance that it could be used in an epic poem without being changed in some particular ; that we need not be more scrupulous in a poem than in tragedy, where much greater liberty is taken ; for too close an adherence to history would cause one to fall into the defect of Lucan, who made a gazette in verse instead of an epic poem. Indeed, it would be ridiculous to transpose events principal and dependent upon one another, to place the battle of Ivry before the battle of Coutras, and the massacre of Saint Bartholomew after the Barricades. But Henry IV may be sent secretly to England, without changing in any wise the succession of the historical events. The same readers who are shocked at his making a sea-voyage of a few leagues, would not be astonished if he were made to go to Guyenne, which is four times the distance. If Virgil made Æneas go to Italy, where he never was, if he made him fall in love with Dido, who lived four hundred years after him, one may, without much scruple, bring together Henry IV and Queen Elizabeth, who esteemed each other, and who had a great desire to meet. Virgil, it will be said, was writing of a very remote period. That is true ; but these events, though of remote antiquity, were very well known. The *Iliad* and the History of Carthage were as familiar to the Romans as the most recent histories are to us ; a French poet has as much right to deceive the reader by a few leagues, as Virgil to deceive him by three hundred years. Finally, this commingling of history and fable is a rule established and followed, not only in all poems, but in all romances. They are full of adventures which, indeed, are not related in history, but which are not belied by it. It is sufficient, in order to justify the voyage of Henry to England, to find a time during which history does not give this prince any other occupation. Now it is certain that, after the death of the Guises, Henry could have made this journey, which would require but two weeks at most, and might have been accomplished in one. Besides, this episode is rendered the more probable by the fact that Queen Elizabeth, six months afterwards, sent four thousand English soldiers to Henry the Great. Moreover, it must be observed that Henry IV, the hero of the poem, is the only person who could have related, worthily, the history of the court of France, and there is hardly any one, save Elizabeth,

I shudder at the thought ; but your command,  
Respect of power forbids me to withstand.  
Others, no doubt, would use refined address,  
Disguise the truth, and make their errors less :  
But I reject an artifice so weak,  
And like a soldier, not an envoy, speak."

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who could have listened to it. Finally, it must be known whether the things said by Henry IV and Queen Elizabeth, are good enough to excuse this fiction in the minds of those who condemn it, and to justify those who approve it.

# THE HENRIADE.

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## CANTO II.

## THE ARGUMENT.

Henry the Great relates to Queen Elizabeth the history of the civil wars of France. He traces them from their origin, and enters into a detail of the massacres committed on St. Bartholomew's Day.



## CANTO THE SECOND.

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“IN France, great sovereign, to increase the curse,<sup>1</sup>  
Our ills are risen from a sacred source.  
Religion, raging with inhuman zeal,  
Arms every hand,<sup>2</sup> and points the fatal steel.  
To me, however, it will least belong,  
To prove the Roman, or Geneva, wrong.  
Whatever names divine the parties claim,  
In mad imposture they are both the same.  
If in the strifes, which Europe’s sons divide,  
Murder and treason mark the erring side;  
Since both alike in blood their hands imbrue,  
Their crimes are equal, and their blindness, too.  
For me, whose business is to guard the state,  
I leave to heaven their vengeance, and their fate.  
My hand ne’er trespass’d on the rights divine;

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<sup>1</sup> This is the only Canto in which the author has made no alterations.

<sup>2</sup> Some inattentive readers will be startled by the boldness of these expressions. It is proper to have some regard for their scruples, and to observe that the very words which would be an impiety in the mouth of a Catholic, are quite natural in that of the King of Navarre. He was then a Calvinist. Many of our historians even describe him as floating between the two religions; and, certainly, if he judged of them only by the conduct of the two parties, he must have distrusted both forms of worship, which were then sustained only by crimes. He is presented here a man of honor, as he really was, seeking in good faith to be enlightened; the friend of truth, the enemy of persecution, and detesting crime wherever he found it.

Or rashly seized the censer at the shrine.  
 Perish each statesman cruel, and unkind,  
 Who reigns despotic o'er the human mind ;  
 Who stains with blood religion's sacred word,  
 And strives to gain new converts by his sword,  
 Presuming rashly, that a gracious God  
 Approves the sacrifice of human blood.  
 Oh, that that God, whose laws I wish to know,  
 On Valois' court my feelings would bestow !  
 The Guises<sup>1</sup> falsely plead religion's cause ;  
 No scruple checks them, and no conscience awes.  
 At me those leaders, insolent and proud,  
 Direct their fury, and ensnare the crowd.  
 These eyes have seen our citizens engage  
 In mutual murders, with a demon's rage ;  
 For vain disputes, have seen their pious care  
 Spread all around the horrid flames of war.  
 You know the madness of those vulgar minds,  
 Which faction warms, and superstition blinds ;  
 When proudly arming in a cause divine,  
 No power their headstrong passion can confine.  
 Erst, in these happy realms, yourself beheld

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<sup>1</sup> Francis, duke de Guise, then commonly called the Great Duke de Guise, was the father of the Balafré. It was he, who, with the cardinal, his son, laid the foundations of the League. He had three great qualities, which it is very important not to confound with virtue.

Thou, the great historian, relates that Francis de Guise advocated the assassination of Antoine de Navarre, father of Henry IV, in the chamber of Francis II. He obtained this young monarch's consent to the murder. Antoine de Navarre had a brave heart, notwithstanding the feebleness of his mind. He was informed of the plot, but did not hesitate to enter the chamber in which it was agreed to assassinate him. "If they kill me," said he to Reinsi, his attendant, "take my bloody shirt to my son and my wife; they will read in my blood what they must do to avenge me." "Francis II dared not," says M. de Thou, "stain himself with this crime; and the Duke de Guise, on leaving the chamber, exclaimed, '*What a wretched king we have!*'"

The rising evil, and it's danger quell'd;  
The troubled scene assumed a milder form;  
Your virtuous cares subdued the gathering storm.  
No reign more pleasing could I wish to see;  
Your laws are flourishing, your city<sup>1</sup> free.  
Far other paths did Medici pursue,  
Far less beloved, less merciful than you.  
Moved by these tales of misery and woe,  
More of her conduct should you seek to know;  
I will myself her character reveal,  
Nor aught exaggerate, nor aught conceal.  
Many have tried, but few could e'er impart  
The secret counsels of so deep a heart.  
Full twenty years within the palace bred,  
Much to my cost, I saw the tempests spread.

“The king, expiring in the bloom of life,  
Left a free course to his ambitious wife.  
Form'd by her cares<sup>2</sup> to empire, either son  
Alike she hated, when he reign'd alone.  
Her hands, the source from whence confusion flow'd,  
The seeds of jealousy and discord sow'd.  
Her deep designs, no wild effect of chance,  
To Condé Guise<sup>3</sup> opposed, and France to France.

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<sup>1</sup> M. de Castelnau, ambassador from France to Queen Elizabeth, thus speaks of her:

“This princess had all the great qualities requisite for reigning happily. Her reign may be compared with that of Augustus, when the temple of Janus was closed,” etc.

<sup>2</sup> Catherine de Medici quarrelled with her son Charles IX near the close of his life, and afterwards with Henry III. She had been so openly discontented with the government of Francis II, that she was suspected, though unjustly, of having hastened the death of this king.

<sup>3</sup> In *The Memoirs of the League* may be found a letter from Catherine de Medici to the Prince de Condé, wherein she thanks him for having taken up arms against the court.

By turns defending enemies and friends,  
And rivals aiding for her private ends.  
False to her sect,<sup>1</sup> and superstition's slave,<sup>2</sup>  
She sought each pleasure<sup>3</sup> which ambition gave.  
While every female fault enslaved her mind,  
Few of your sex's virtues she combined.  
Forgive the freedom of an honest heart ;  
You reign, a stranger to your sex's art.  
August Eliza, blest with every charm,  
That thought can fancy, or that heaven can form,  
To win affection, or to guard a state,  
Lives a bright pattern to the good and great.  
With love and wonder all your deeds are seen,  
And Europe ranks you with her greatest men.  
Francis the Second, in youth's early pride,  
Was buried by his hapless father's side.  
Guise he adored, no more his years had shown,  
Nor vice, nor virtue mark'd him for their own.  
Charles, younger still, the regal name obtain'd,  
But fear evinc'd ; 'twas Medici that reign'd.  
She sought by artful policy to bring  
Perpetual childhood on the rising king.  
A hundred battles spoke her new command,  
And Discord's flames were kindled by her hand.  
Two rival parties she with rage inspired,  
Their arms directed, and their bosoms fired.  
Dreux<sup>4</sup> first beheld their banners wave in air,

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<sup>1</sup> When she thought the battle of Dreux lost, and the Protestants victorious, she exclaimed : " Very well, we will worship God in French."

<sup>2</sup> She was so weak as to believe in magic : witness the talismans found after her death.

<sup>3</sup> She was accused of having had amours with the Vidame of Chartres, who died in the Bastile, and with a gentleman of Brittany, named Moscouët.

<sup>4</sup> The battle of Dreux was the first pitched battle between the Catholic and Protestant parties. It took place in 1562.

Ill-fated theatre of horrid war !  
 Old Montmorency,<sup>1</sup> near the royal tomb,  
 Met from a warrior's arm a warrior's doom.  
 Guise,<sup>2</sup> while at Orleans pressing hard his foe,  
 Fell 'neath a stern assassin's mortal blow.  
 My father,<sup>3</sup> still unwilling slave at court,

<sup>1</sup> Anne de Montmorency, a headstrong and inflexible man, and the most unfortunate general of his time, was taken prisoner at Pavia and at Dreux, beaten at Saint-Quentin by Philip II, and, at last, mortally wounded at the battle of Saint-Denis, by an Englishman named Stuart, the same who had taken him at the battle of Dreux.

<sup>2</sup> This is the same Francis de Guise already mentioned, famous for the defence of Metz against Charles V. He was besieging the Protestants in Orleans, in 1563, when Poltrot de Méré, a gentleman of Angoumois, killed him, from behind, by means of a pistol loaded with three poisoned balls. He died at the age of forty-four years, covered with glory, and regretted by the Catholics.

<sup>3</sup> Antoine de Bourbon, king of Navarre, father of the most intrepid and firmest of all men, was himself the most feeble and the most vacillating. He was a Huguenot, and his wife a Catholic. They both changed their religion about the same time.

Jeane d'Albret was afterwards a most obstinate Huguenot ; but Antoine wavered so much in his Catholicity, that it is doubtful in what religion he died. He took up arms against the Protestants, whom he loved, and served Catherine de Medici, whom he detested, and the party of the Guises, who oppressed him.

He expected the regency after the death of Francis II. The queen-mother sent for him. "I know," said she to him, "that you aspire to the government ; I wish that you would cede it to me, at once, by an instrument in your own handwriting, and that you would promise to surrender the regency to me, if the states confer it upon you." Antoine de Bourbon gave to the queen the writing which she demanded, and thus signed his own dishonor. It was upon this occasion that de Mesmes, first president, wrote the following verses, which I have read in his manuscript :

" Marc Antony, who might have been  
 The greatest lord and proudest king,  
 So thoughtless of himself became,  
 That to a queen<sup>1</sup> he bent his knee,  
 Content to be plain Antony.  
 The Royal Bourbon did the same."

After the conspiracy of Amboise, a great number of gentlemen came to offer their services and their lives to Antoine de Navarre ; he placed



Was fortune's bubble, and the queen's support ;  
 Wrought his own fate ; in battle firmly stood,  
 And died for those who thirsted for his blood.  
 Condé<sup>1</sup> vouchsafed a parent's aid to lend,

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himself at their head ; but he dismissed them soon afterwards, promising to procure their pardon. "Think of obtaining it for yourself," replied an old captain, "ours is at the point of our swords."

He died at the age of forty-four years, from an arquebuse wound received in the left shoulder, at the siege of Rouen, where he commanded. His death occurred on the 17th of November, 1562, the thirty-fifth day after his wound. The incertitude in which he had been during all his life, troubled his last moments ; and, although he received the sacraments, according to the usage of the Roman Church, it is doubtful whether he did not die a Protestant.

M. Jurieu asserts that when Louis, prince de Condé, was in prison at Orleans, the King of Navarre, his brother, went in his behalf to the Cardinal de Lorraine, and that the latter received him seated and covered, while the King of Navarre stood in his presence bareheaded. I do not know where M. Jurieu found any foundation for this assertion.

<sup>1</sup> Louis de Condé, brother of Antoine, the king of Navarre, the seventh and last of the children of Charles de Bourbon, duke de Vendôme, was one of those extraordinary men who seem born for the misfortune and glory of their country. He was, for a long time, the chief of the Reformers, and fell, as all know, at Jarnac. He had one of his arms in a sling when he went into the battle. As he was marching against the enemy, the horse of the Count de la Rochefoucauld, his brother-in-law, gave him a kick which broke his leg. Without deigning to complain, he said to the gentlemen around him : "Learn that fiery horses are more dangerous than useful in an army." An instant afterwards, he said to them, with an arm in a sling, and a broken leg : "The Prince de Condé does not fear to give battle, when you follow him," and charged immediately upon the enemy.

Brantôme says that, after the prince had been taken prisoner in this battle, a very brave and very civil gentleman, named Montesquiou, rode up to him, and having asked who he was, and being told that he was the Prince de Condé, cried out : "Die ! die !" and immediately shot him through the head with a pistol. Montesquiou was a captain in the guards of the Duke d'Anjou, afterwards Henry III. The Count de Soissons, youngest son of the Prince de Condé, looked everywhere for Montesquiou and his relatives, in order to sacrifice them to his vengeance.

Henry IV was at the battle of Jarnac, and, although only fourteen years old, observed the mistakes which resulted in its loss to the Protestants.

The Prince de Condé was hunchbacked and small, nevertheless he was very amusing, witty, gallant, and loved by the women. The following lines were written upon him :



My surest guardian, and my truest friend.  
 Nursed in his camp, beneath the laurel's shade,  
 Amid surrounding heroes was I bred.  
 Like him, disdaining indolence and sloth,  
 Arms were the only playthings of my youth.  
 O plains of Jarnac! O unhappy day,  
 That took my guardian and my friend away!  
 Condé, whose kind protection I enjoy'd,

"This little man so full of wiles,  
 Who always chats and always smiles,  
 Who'll kiss his lady when he can;  
 God keep from harm this little man!"

The Marshal de Saint-André ruined himself for him, and gave him, among other presents, the lands of Vallery, which have since become the burial-place of the princes of the house of Condé.

Never was general more beloved by his soldiers. An astonishing example of this love was seen at Pont-a-Mousson. He was in want of money for his troops, especially for the Germans who had come to his relief, and who threatened to abandon him. He dared to propose to his own soldiers whom he could not pay, that they should pay the auxiliary army; and, what could never happen except in a religious war, and under such a general as himself, all his troops assessed themselves, even to the smallest soldier-boy.

He was condemned, at Orleans, under Francis II, to lose his head; but it is not certain that the sentence was signed. France was astonished to see a peer, and a prince of the royal blood, who could be judged only by the court of peers, obliged to answer before Commissioners; but what seemed most astonishing was, that these Commissioners were taken from the members of the parliament. They were Christophe de Thou, afterwards first president, and father of the historian; Barthélemi Faye, Jacques Viole, counsellors; Bourdin, attorney-general, and Du Tillet, register; all of whom, in accepting this commission, forfeited their privileges, and deprived themselves thereby of the liberty of claiming their rights, if ever they were cited before other than their legitimate judges. It is pretended that Madame Renée de France, daughter of Louis XII, and the Duchess de Ferrara, who arrived in France about this time, contributed not a little to hinder the execution of their sentence.

We must not omit an artifice made use of to destroy this prince who was called Louis. His enemies caused a medal to be struck which represented him; it bore the following legend: "*Louis XIII, king of France.*" They contrived to have it fall into the hands of the Constable Montmorency, who, in a violent rage, showed it to the king, persuaded that the Prince de Condé had ordered it to be struck. This medal is spoken of in Brantôme and in Vigneul de Marville.

Thy murdering hand, O Montesquieu! destroy'd:  
 Too young to stay, I saw the fatal blow,  
 Nor could I wreak my vengeance on the foe.  
 Young and untaught, exposed to every ill,  
 Heaven found a hero to protect me still;  
 Great Condé first my steps to glory train'd,  
 Next, my good cause, Coligni's<sup>1</sup> arm sustain'd:  
 Coligni, gracious queen! if Europe see  
 A virtue worthy her regard in me,  
 If Rome herself confess my youthful days  
 Not unrenown'd, Coligni's be the praise.  
 Early I learn'd beneath his eye to bear  
 A soldier's hardships in the school of war;  
 His great example my ambition fired;  
 His counsel form'd me, and his deeds inspired.  
 I saw him gray in arms, yet undismay'd,

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<sup>1</sup> Gaspard de Coligni, admiral of France, son of Gaspard de Coligni, marshal of France, and of Louise de Montmorency, sister of the constable, was born at Châtillon, February, 16, 1516. After the death of Condé, he was declared leader of the party of the Reformers in France. Catherine de Medici and Charles IX contrived to draw him to the court, on the occasion of the marriage of Henry IV and Marguerite de Valois, sister of Charles IX and Henry III. He was of the number of those who perished at the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, which was aimed chiefly against this great man.

Some have reproached the author of *The Henriade* for having selected as his hero, in this Second Canto, a Huguenot, who had revolted against his king, and who was publicly accused of the assassination of Francis de Guise. This commendable criticism is founded on the obedience due to a sovereign, which ought to form the chief characteristic of a French hero; but it must be remembered that it is here Henry IV who is speaking. He had made his first campaigns under the admiral, who filled the place of a father to him. He had been accustomed to respect him, and should not, and could not, suspect him of any action unworthy of a great man, especially after the public justification of Coligni, which could not appear doubtful to the King of Navarre.

As to the revolt, it was impossible for this prince to regard, as a crime in the admiral, his union with the house of Bourbon against the Lorrains and an Italian woman. As to religion, they were both Protestants; and the Huguenots, of whom Henry IV was the leader, regarded the admiral as a martyr.

The general cause depending on his aid.  
Dear to his friends, respected by the foe,  
Firm in all states, majestic, though in woe ;  
Expert alike in battle and retreat,  
More glorious, e'en more awful in defeat,  
Than Gaston or than Dunois in the pride  
Of war, with prospering fortune at their side.

“Ten years elapsed of battles lost and won ;  
Still on the field our well-arm'd legions shone.  
With grief the queen her barren trophies view'd,  
Our troops observed, though vanquish'd, unsubdued,  
And, at one stroke, one fatal stroke, ordain'd,  
To sweep the civil fury from the land.  
Sudden new counsels in her court prevail'd,  
And peace was offer'd, when the sword had fail'd.  
Peace! be thou witness, heaven's avenging power!  
That treacherous olive, how it blush'd with gore ;  
Gods! is it then so hard a task to stray,  
And shall their monarchs teach mankind the way?

“True to his sovereign, still devoutly true,  
Though he opposed her, to his country too,  
Coligni seized the happy hour to heal  
Her bleeding interests, with a patriot's zeal.  
Undaunted through surrounding foes he press'd  
(Suspicious seldom haunt a hero's breast),  
Nor staid, till in her own august abode,  
Full in the midst before the queen he stood.  
With circling arms and flowing tears she strove  
To lavish o'er me e'en a mother's love.  
Coligni's friendship was her dearest choice—  
Still to be ruled by his unerring voice ;  
Wealth, power, and honor at his feet she laid,

Her son's indulgence to our hopes display'd :  
Vain flattering hopes, alas ! and quickly fled.  
All were not blinded by this specious show  
Of cordial grace and bounty from the foe.  
But Charles, still anxious to insure success,  
More bounteous seem'd, as they believed him less.  
Train'd up in falsehood from his earliest youth,  
He held eternal enmity with truth ;  
From infant years had treasured in his heart  
The poisonous precepts of his mother's art ;  
And fierce by nature, merciless and proud,  
With ease was ripen'd to the work of blood.  
More deeply still to veil the dark design,  
By nuptial bands he made his sister mine.<sup>1</sup>  
Oh, bands accurst, and Hymen's rites profaned,  
By heaven, in anger for our curse, ordain'd,  
Whose baleful torch, dire omen of our doom,  
Blazed but to lead me to a mother's tomb.  
Though I have suffer'd, let me still be just,<sup>2</sup>  
Nor blame thee, Medici, but where I must :

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<sup>1</sup> Marguerite de Valois, sister of Charles IX, was married to Henry IV, in 1572, a few days before the massacres.

<sup>2</sup> Jeanne d'Albret, attracted to Paris with the other Huguenots, died after a sickness of five days. The time of her death, the massacres which followed it, the fear that her courage would have given to the court, in short, her sickness, which commenced after having purchased some gloves and some perfumed collars of a perfumer named René, who had come from Florence with the queen, and who passed for a public poisoner ; all these created the suspicion that she died of poison. It is even said that this René boasted of his crime, and dared to say that he did as much for two great lords who did not suspect him. Mézeray, in his history, seems to favor this opinion, by saying that the surgeons who opened the body of the queen, did not touch the head, where they suspected that the poison had left some visible traces. These suspicions are not placed in the mouth of Henry IV, because it is necessary to guard against the idea that the great never die by natural causes. The people, without consideration, always regard, as guilty of the death of a prince, those to whom this death may be useful. The liberty to entertain these suspicions was so far indulged as to accuse Catherine de Medici of the death of her own children ; although

Suspicious, though on reason firmly built,  
 I scorn, nor need them to enhance thy guilt.  
 My mother died—forgive these tears I shed,  
 Due to the fond remembrance of the dead.  
 Meanwhile the dreadful hour in swift career,  
 Big with the queen's vindictive wrath, drew near.

“Night's robe was scarcely thrown o'er earth and heaven,  
 When silently the appointed sign was given.

there never was any proof that these children, or that Jeanne d'Albret, died by poisoning.

It is not true, as Mézeray pretends, that the head of the Queen of Navarre was not opened. She recommended expressly that this part should be examined after her death. She had been tormented all her life with great pains in her head, accompanied by itchings, and ordered that the cause of it should be carefully sought out, for the benefit of her children, in case they should be similarly attacked. The *Chronologie Novennaire* reports formally that Caillard, her physician, and Desnoeuds, her surgeon, dissected her brain and found it very healthy; that they perceived only a few drops of water lodged between the skull and the pellicle which enveloped the brain; and which they judged to be the cause of the headache of which she had complained. They certified, moreover, that she had died of an abscess formed in the breast. It must be observed that those who opened her were Huguenots; and that it is probable they would have spoken of poison if they had found any thing like it. It may be replied that they were bribed by the court; but Desnoeuds, the surgeon of Jeanne d'Albret, a violent Huguenot, afterwards wrote libels against the court, which he would not have done had he been sold to it; and in these libels he did not say that Jeanne d'Albret had been poisoned. Besides, it is incredible that a woman as cunning as Catherine de Medici would have given such a commission to a miserable perfumer, who had, as they say, the insolence to boast of it.

Jeanne d'Albret was born, in 1530, of Henry d'Albret, king of Navarre, and of Marguerite de Valois, sister of Francis I. At the age of twelve years, Jeanne was married to William, Duke de Cleves, with whom she never lived. Two years after, the marriage was declared void by Pope Paul III, and she then married Antoine de Bourbon. This second marriage, contracted during the life of the first husband, gave occasion to the preachers of the League for saying publicly, in their sermons against Henry IV, that he was a bastard. But what was most strange was, that the Guises, and among others this Francis de Guise, said to have been so religious a man, took advantage of the feebleness of Antoine de Bourbon to persuade him to repudiate his wife, by whom he had children, in order that he might marry their niece, and devote himself entirely to their cause.



The moon,<sup>1</sup> pale regent, falter'd on her way,  
 And, sickening, seem'd to hide her feeble ray.  
 Coligni slept, and largely o'er his head  
 The drowsy power had now his influence shed;  
 Sudden, unnumber'd shrieks dispell'd the charm;  
 His rallying senses felt the dread alarm;  
 He waked, look'd forth, and saw the assassin throng  
 With murderous strides march hastily along;  
 Saw on their arms the quivering torch-light play,  
 His palace fired, a nation in dismay,  
 His bleeding household stifled in the flames,  
 While all the savage host around exclaims:  
 'Let no compassion check your righteous hands,  
 'Tis God, 'tis Medici, 'tis Charles commands.'  
 Now his own namę shrill echoing, rends the skies,  
 And now far off Teligni<sup>2</sup> he descries—  
 Teligni, famed for every virtuous grace,  
 Whose truth had earn'd his daughter's chaste embrace,  
 Hope of his cause, and honor of his race.  
 The bleeding youth by ruffians' force convey'd,  
 With outstretch'd arms demands his instant aid.  
 Helpless, unarm'd, he saw his fate decreed,

The King of Navarre barely escaped this snare. Jeanne d'Albret died, June 9, 1572, at the age of forty-two years.

M. Bayle, in his *Replies to the Questions of a Provincial*, says that, during his time, there was, in Holland, the son of a minister, named Goyon, who passed for the grandson of this queen. It is pretended, that after the death of Antoine de Navarre, she married a gentleman named Goyon, by whom she had this minister.

<sup>1</sup> It was on the night of the 23d of August, the feast of Saint Bartholomew, in 1572, that this bloody tragedy took place.

The admiral was lodged in the Rue Bétizy, in the house now occupied as an inn, known as the Hotel Saint-Pierre, where his chamber is still shown.

<sup>2</sup> The Count de Teligni had married the admiral's daughter ten months before. He had a countenance so remarkably pleasant, that the first who came to kill him were unable to perform their task; but others, more barbarous, massacred him.



Saw that his blood must unrevenge'd be shed ;  
Yet bravely anxious for renown achieved,  
Wish'd but to die the hero he had lived.

“ Already the tumultuous band explore  
His own recess, and thunder at the door.  
Instant he flings it wide, and meets the foe  
With eye untroubled, and majestic brow—  
Such as in battle, when with steady breast  
He urged the slaughter, or his troops repress'd.

“ Awful and sage he stood ; his gracious form  
Quell'd the loud tumult, and controll'd the storm.  
'Finish, my friends, your fatal task,' he said ;  
'Bathe in my freezing blood this hoary head—  
These locks, which yet, full many a boisterous year,  
E'en the rough chance of war, has deign'd to spare.  
Strike, and strike deep ; be satisfied, and know  
With my last breath I can forgive the blow !  
The mean desire of life my soul abjures—  
Yet happier ! might I die defending yours.'

“ The savage band grown human at his words,  
Clasping his knees, let fall their idle swords ;  
Prone on the ground his pardoning grace implore,  
And at his feet repentant sorrows pour ;  
He in the midst, like some loved monarch, rose,  
Theme of his subjects' pride, and idol of their vows.

“ Now Besme,<sup>1</sup> impatient for his destined prey,  
Rush'd headlong in, enraged at their delay.

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<sup>1</sup> Besme was a German, a domestic of the house of Guise. This miserable wretch being afterwards taken by the Protestants, the people of Rochelle bought him, in order to tear him to pieces on their public square.

Furious, he saw the deed unfinished yet,  
And each assassin trembling at his feet.  
No change in him this scene of sorrow wrought;  
Hard and unfeeling still, the caitiff thought  
Whoe'er relented at Coligni's fate,  
Was the queen's foe, a rebel to the state.  
Now through the crowd he makes impetuous way;  
Firm stands the chief, unconscious of dismay;  
Deep in his side the fierce barbarian struck  
The fatal steel, but with averted look,  
Lest at a glance that eye's resistless charm  
Should freeze his purpose, and unnerve his arm.  
Such was the brave Coligni's mournful end;  
Affront<sup>1</sup> and outrage e'en his death attend.

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They proposed, subsequently, to exchange him for the brave Montbrun, leader of the Protestants of Dauphiné, then on trial before the parliament of Grenoble. Montbrun was executed, and Besme was then killed by a man named Bretanville.

<sup>1</sup> It is impossible to ascertain whether, or not, Catherine de Medici sent the head of the Admiral to Rome, as the Protestants assert. But it is certain that his head was carried to the queen, with a box full of papers, among which was a history of the times, in the handwriting of Coligni. In this box were also found several papers on public affairs. The object of one of these documents was to engage Charles to make war against the English. Charles IX caused this paper to be read to the English ambassador, who was complaining to him of the treachery towards the Protestants, and who but despised the more the policy of the French court. Another paper showed the dangers to which the king would expose the tranquillity of the realm if he should give an estate to his brother, the Duke d'Alençon. This was shown to the young prince, who was regretting the admiral. "I do not know," replied he, after reading it, "whether this paper is written by one of my friends, but it is surely written by a faithful subject."—*K*.

The populace dragged the body of the admiral through the streets, and hung it by the feet in chains on the gibbet of Montfaucon. The king had the cruelty to go with his court to Montfaucon to enjoy this horrible spectacle. Some one having remarked that the body of the admiral smelt bad, he replied, like Vitellius: "The body of a dead enemy always smells good."

He went to the parliament to accuse the admiral of a conspiracy, and the parliament rendered a judgment against the deceased; it was ordered that his body, after having been dragged upon a hurdle, should be hung upon a gallows; his children were declared not noble, and incapable of holding any office; his house of Chatillon-sur-Loing was razed to the ground,

The ravening hawk and vulture hover round  
 His mangled limbs, still festering on the ground.  
 At the queen's feet his sacred head is thrown,  
 A conquest worthy both herself and son.  
 With brow unalter'd and serene she sate ;  
 Nor seem'd to enjoy the triumph of her hate ;  
 To veil her secret thoughts so well she knew,  
 And so familiar horrors to her view.

“ Vain were the task, and endless, to recite  
 Each horrid scene of that disastrous night ;  
 Coligni's death but served, alas, too well,  
 Our future woes, our struggles to foretell.  
 Legions of bigots, flush'd with fiery zeal  
 And frantic ardor, shake the murdering steel ;  
 Proudly they march where heaps of slaughter rise,  
 Unsated vengeance sparkling in their eyes.  
 Guise,<sup>1</sup> in the van, full many a victim paid,

the trees cut down, etc. ; and it was decreed that, every year, a procession should be formed on Saint Bartholomew's Day, to thank God for discovering the conspiracy,—a conspiracy of which the admiral never dreamed. In spite of this sentence, the daughter of the admiral, Teligni's widow, married, some time after, the Prince of Orange.

The parliament had, a few years before, put the price of fifty thousand crowns upon his head ; it is singular enough that this is precisely the same price that was afterwards put upon that of cardinal Mazarin. The genius of the French is to turn the most frightful events into ridicule ; to this disposition are we indebted for a paper entitled *Passio Domini nostri Gaspari Coligni, secundum Bartholomæum*.

Mézeray makes an assertion in his great history, which we may be permitted to doubt. He says that, some years before, Michel Crellet, guardian of the Franciscans of Saintes, who was condemned by the admiral to be hung, predicted to him that he should die by assassination, should be thrown out of his window, and afterwards hung.

Not long since, an officer of finance having purchased a piece of land which had belonged to the Colignis, found thereupon, a few feet under ground, an iron chest full of papers, which he threw into the fire, because, as he believed, they would never produce him any revenue.

<sup>1</sup> This was Henry, duke de Guise, surnamed the Balafre, who afterwards

Indignant, to his father's injured shade ;  
Nevers,<sup>1</sup> Gondi,<sup>2</sup> and Tavanne<sup>3</sup> shout aloud,  
And chafe to madness the deluded crowd ;  
Long registers of deaths foredoom'd display,  
And guide the poniard to its destined prey.

“The tumult I omit, the deaf'ning screams,  
The blood that flow'd in deep and widening streams ;  
The son and father murder'd by one blade,  
The brother, sister, daughter, mother laid  
Together in death's ever deepening shade ;  
The flames that crept along the mouldering wall,  
Therewith to crush the cradle in its fall.  
Events like these we view with less surprise,  
For still they mark the track where human frenzy flies.  
But stranger far, what few will e'er believe  
In future ages, or yourself conceive,  
The barbarous rout, whose hearts with added fire,  
Those holy butchers madden'd priests inspire ;  
E'en from the carnage call upon the Lord,  
And waving high in air the reeking sword,

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became famous for the part he took in the battle of the Barricades, and who was slain at Blois. He was the son of Duke Francis, who was assassinated by Poltrot.

<sup>1</sup> Frederic de Gonzague, of the house of Mantua, duke de Nevers, one of the authors of the massacre of Saint Bartholomew.

<sup>2</sup> Albert de Gondi, marshal de Retz, a favorite of Catherine de Medici. It was he who taught Charles IX to blaspheme and deny God, as was said in those times.—*K*.

<sup>3</sup> Gaspard de Tavannes, who was brought up as a page of Francis I. He ran about the streets on the night of Saint Bartholomew crying: “Blood ! blood ! blood-letting is as good in the month of August as in the month of May.” His son, who wrote his memoirs, relates that his father being upon his death-bed, made a general confession of his life, and that his confessor having said to him, with an air of astonishment: “What ! have you nothing to say of Saint Bartholomew's Day ?” “I regard it,” replied the marshal, “as a meritorious action, which ought to efface my other sins.”

Offer aloud to God the sacrifice abhorr'd.  
 What numerous heroes in that havoc died !  
 Resnel<sup>1</sup> and brave Pardaillan by his side,  
 Guerehy<sup>2</sup> and wise Lavardin, worthy well  
 A longer life and gentler fortune, fell.  
 Among the wretched, whom that night of woe  
 Plunged in the gloom of endless night below,  
 Marsillac and Soubise<sup>3</sup> mark'd down to death,  
 Defended stoutly their devoted breath,  
 Until with labor wearied and foredone,  
 Close to the Louvre's gate push'd roughly on,  
 They to the king in suppliant accents call,  
 And unregarded, mid their murderers, fall.

“ High on the roof the royal fury stood,  
 At leisure feasting on the scenes of blood.  
 Her cruel minions watch the gloomy host,  
 And mark the spot where slaughter rages most.  
 Brave chiefs ! triumphant only in their shame,  
 They saw their country blaze, and gloried in the flame.

“ Oh, scandal to the name of king revered !

<sup>1</sup> Antoine de Clermont-Resnel, escaping in his shirt, was slain by the son of the Baron des Adrets, and by his own cousin, Bussy d'Amboise. The Marquis de Pardaillan was killed by his side.

<sup>2</sup> Guerehy defended himself a long time in the street, and killed several of his assailants, before being overwhelmed by numbers ; but the Marquis de Lavardin had not time to draw his sword.

<sup>3</sup> Marsillac, count de la Rochefoucauld, was a favorite of Charles IX, and had passed a part of the night with the king, who desired to save his life, and even asked him to sleep in the Louvre, but finally permitted him to go, saying : “ I see that God determines that he shall perish.”

Soubise bore this name, because he had espoused the heir of the house of Soubise. His own name was Dupont-Quellenec. He defended himself a long time, and fell covered with wounds under the window of the queen. As his wife had applied for a divorce from him on account of impotency, the ladies of the royal household ran out to examine his naked and bloody body, through a barbarous curiosity worthy of that abominable court.



Himself,<sup>1</sup> the monarch, joins the felon herd ;  
 Himself the trembling fugitives pursues,  
 And e'en his sacred hands in blood imbrues.  
 This Valois, too, whose cause I now support,<sup>2</sup>  
 Who comes, by me, a suppliant to your court,  
 Shared in his brother's guilt an impious part,  
 And roused the flame of vengeance in his heart ;  
 Nor yet is Valois fierce, of savage mood,  
 Or prone by nature to delight in blood ;  
 But on his youth those dire examples wrought,  
 Weakness was his ; of malice he had naught.

“ A few there were whom vengeance sought in vain,

<sup>1</sup> Observe what Brantôme confesses, without any hesitation, in his memoirs : “ When the day dawned, the king put his head out of the window of his chamber, and seeing some individuals in the Faubourg Saint-Germain, hastening to make their escape, he took a large arquebuse, and though too far to reach, fired upon them, crying out : ‘ Kill them ! kill them ! ’ ”

Several persons have heard the Marshal de Tessé relate that, in his youth, he met with a gentleman more than a hundred years old, who had been one of the guards of Charles IX. He interrogated this old man in regard to the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, and asked him whether it was true that the king had fired upon the Huguenots. “ It was I,” said the old man, “ who loaded his arquebuse.”

Henry IV said publicly, more than once, that after the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, a flock of crows perched upon the Louvre, and that, during seven nights, the king himself, and all the court, heard groans and frightful cries at the same hour. He related a still more remarkable prodigy : he said that, some days before the massacre, while playing at dice with the Duke d'Alençon and the Duke de Guise, he saw drops of blood upon the table ; that twice he wiped them off, and that twice they reappeared, and that, seized with terror, he stopped playing.

<sup>2</sup> In the *Mémoires de Villeroy* may be found a discourse by Henry III, on the massacre of Saint Bartholomew's Day, wherein this prince exculpates Charles IX, and accuses his mother and himself. Charles IX, according to this narrative, was led into this affair by the solicitations of his mother and his brother, who confessed to him that the assassination of Coligni was committed by their order, and that it would be necessary for him either to sacrifice them to the admiral, or to order the massacre of the Protestants, for which they had already made preparations. Voltaire could not admit this narrative without rendering Valois too odious.—K.



Who 'scaped unhurt among the thousands slain.  
Caumont! thy fortune, thy auspicious fate,  
Ages unborn with wonder shall relate.  
The hoary sire between his sons reposed,

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<sup>1</sup> Caumont, who escaped the massacre, was the famous Marshal de la Force, who afterwards gained so great a reputation, and who lived to the age of eighty years. He left memoirs which have not been printed, and which must be still in the family of la Force.

Mézeray, in his great history, says that young Caumont, his father, and his brother, were sleeping in the same bed; that his father and brother were massacred, and that he escaped by a miracle, etc. It is upon the faith of this historian that I have put this adventure in verse.

The circumstances upon which Mézeray supports his narrative, did not permit me to doubt the truth of what he relates; but the Duke de la Force has since shown me the manuscript memoirs of this same Marshal de la Force, written in his own hand. The marshal there relates his adventure in a manner calculated to shake our faith in historians.

The following is an extract from the curious particulars which the Marshal de la Force relates of the massacre of Saint Bartholomew:

Two days before the massacre, the king had ordered the parliament to release an officer who was a prisoner in the Conciergerie. The parliament having done nothing in the matter, the king sent some of his guards to force the doors of the prison, and to set the prisoner at liberty. The next day, the parliament remonstrated with the king, all the members of it placing their arms in slings, to show him that he had crippled justice. This circumstance made a great deal of noise; and at the commencement of the massacre, the Huguenots were persuaded that the tumult which they heard arose from a sedition excited among the people, on account of the affair with parliament.

In the mean time, a horse-dealer, who had seen the Duke de Guise, with his satellites, enter the house of the Admiral de Coligni, and who, slipping into the crowd, had witnessed the assassination of this nobleman, ran immediately to warn the Sieur de Caumont de la Force, to whom he had sold ten horses, a week before.

La Force and his two sons, as well as several Calvinists, were lodging in the faubourg Saint-Germain. There was, at this time, no bridge that connected this faubourg with the city. All the boats had been seized, by order of the court, for the purpose of carrying the assassins to the faubourg. This horse-dealer thereupon swam the river, and warned M. de la Force of his danger. La Force had already left his house, and might have saved himself; but finding that his children did not come, he returned in search of them. Scarcely had he entered the house than the assassins arrived. One named Martin, who was at their head, entered his chamber, disarmed him and his two children, and told them to prepare to die. La Force offered him a ransom of two thousand crowns, which he accepted. La Force swore that he would pay it within two days; and immediately

His aged eyes in needful slumber closed ;  
One bed sufficed them all. Now, rushing in,  
The fell destroyers mar the peaceful scene.  
With hasty strokes their poniards plunging round,

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the assassins, after having pillaged the house, told him and his children to put their handkerchiefs in the form of a cross upon their hats, and to roll up their right sleeves to the shoulder : this was the mark of the murderers. In this condition they were taken across the river into the city. The Marshal de la Force asserts that he saw the river covered with dead bodies. His father, brother, and himself, landed opposite to the Louvre ; where they witnessed the murder of several of their friends, and, among others, the brave de Piles, father of him who killed the son of Malherbe in a duel. Thence Captain Martin took his prisoners to his own house in the Rue des Petits Champs, and making la Force swear that neither he nor his children would go out before paying the two thousand crowns, he left them in charge of two Swiss soldiers, and went out again to massacre other Calvinists.

One of the Swiss soldiers, touched with compassion, offered to save the prisoners. La Force would not consent, saying that he had given his word, and that he would rather die than break it. An aunt procured for him the two thousand crowns, and the money was about to be delivered to Captain Martin, when the Count de Coconas (the same who was subsequently decapitated) came to tell la Force that the Duke d'Anjou wished to speak to him. Immediately the father and children were compelled to leave the room bareheaded, and without their cloaks. La Force perceived that they were leading him out to die. He followed Coconas, beseeching him to spare his two innocent children. The youngest, aged thirteen years, who was named Jacques Nomparr, and who wrote this narrative, reproached the murderers with their crimes, and told them that they would be punished by God. Nevertheless, the two children were led, with their father, to the end of the Rue des Petits Champs, where a poniard was first plunged several times into the elder, who cried out : " Ah, my God ! Ah, my God, I am dead ! " A moment after, the father fell, pierced with many wounds, upon the body of his son. The younger, covered by blood, but, by a miracle, unharmed, had the prudence to cry out, also : " I am dead," and to fall between his father and brother, whose last sighs he received. The murderers, believing them all dead, went away, saying : " All three are well disposed of." Some wretched beings came afterwards to strip the bodies. One of them, a tennis-marker, from Verdelet, perceiving a linen stocking upon the young la Force, determined to take it, and in drawing it off, could not avoid observing the body of the child. " Alas ! " said he, " what a pity ! it is only a child ; what can he have done ? " These words of compassion induced the young la Force to raise his head gently, and to whisper to him : " I am not dead yet." " Do not stir, my child," replied the poor man, " have patience." In the evening, he returned, and said to him : " Get up, there is no one

They deal a random death at every wound.  
But He, whose mercies o'er our fate preside,  
Can waft with ease the threatening hour aside :  
Through very zeal to slay, the son they spare,  
And not a blow does youthful Caumont share.  
A hand unseen is stretch'd in his defence,  
To screen from harm his infant innocence ;  
The father's body on the son descends,  
Conceals, and thus, twice, being to him lends.

“ Me, to sweet sleep resign'd and balmy rest,  
No fear alarm'd, no jealousy possess'd.  
But, oh ! what scenes my waking eyes survey'd ;  
Grim death in all his horrid pomp array'd ;  
Porches and porticos now covered o'er  
With crimson stains, and mid their pools of gore,  
My friends still bleeding, my domestics slain,  
The truest, best, and dearest of my train.  
Already at my bed the villains stand  
Prepared, already lift the murdering hand ;  
My life hangs wav'ring on a point, I wait  
The final stroke, and yield me to my fate.

“ But whether reverence of their ancient lords,  
The blood of Bourbon, check'd their daring swords ;

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here,” and at the same time he threw over the boy's shoulders a tattered cloak. While leading him along, an assassin met them, and asked, “ Who is this little boy ? ” “ It is my nephew,” replied the marker ; “ he is drunk ; you see how he has dressed himself ; I shall whip him soundly.” Finally, the poor marker led him home, and asked thirty crowns for his recompense. From there the young la Force went, disguised as a beggar, to the house of his relative, Marshal de Biron, who was grand master of the artillery. He was concealed, for some days, in the apartments of the females ; and, finally, the court having commenced a vigorous search for him, he was saved in the dress of a page, under the name of Beaupui.

Whether, ingenious to torment, the queen  
 Held Henry's life a sacrifice too mean;  
 Or wisely spared it, to secure alone,  
 In future storms, a shelter for her own;  
 Instead of death, at once, to set me free,  
 Chains<sup>1</sup> and a dungeon were her stern decree.

“Far happier was the fate Coligni shared:  
 His life alone her treacherous arts ensnared.  
 Freedom and glory kept he unimpair'd. . . .  
 I see Eliza shares in the distress,  
 Though half the sad recital I suppress.  
 It seem'd as from the queen's malignant eye  
 All France had caught the signal to destroy;  
 Swift from the capital,<sup>2</sup> on every side,

<sup>1</sup> Several gentlemen attached to Henry IV were assassinated in his apartment; some were pursued even into the chamber of his wife, the sister of Charles IX, who saved their lives by throwing herself between them and the murderers. Henry IV and the Prince de Condé, his cousin, were arrested, threatened with death, and compelled to abjure Calvinism. The priests, afterwards, made this abjuration the ground for treating them as relapsed. Some historians affirm that Charles IX and his mother went to the Hotel de Ville to witness the execution of Briquemant and Cavagne, who were condemned to death as accomplices in the pretended conspiracy which they had the baseness to impute to the Admiral de Coligni, and that Henry IV and the Prince de Condé were compelled to accompany them.—K.

<sup>2</sup> Couriers were, at first, sent to the commanders of the provinces and to the chiefs of the principal cities, to order the massacre. Some time after, the order was countermanded; but the massacre was not prevented in some cities, at Lyons, among others, where the party of the Guises was dominant. In a great number of cities, however, the Catholic leaders opposed the execution of the order: for example, the Count de Tende, in Provence; Gordes, of the house of Simiane, in Dauphiny; Saint-Hérem, in Auvergne; Charny, of the house of Chabot, in Burgundy; La Guiche at Mâcon; the brave d'Ortez at Bayonne; Villars, consul of Nîmes; the bishops of Angers, Lisieux, etc., etc. Many Protestants were saved by their relatives and by their friends; some by priests. Of this number was one Tronchin, who remained several days concealed at Troyes, in a cask, and, having retired to Geneva, became there the head of the family of that name.—K.

Death o'er the kingdom stretch'd his banners wide.  
Kings in their vengeance are too well obey'd ;  
Whole armies blindly lend their impious aid ;  
France floats in blood, and all her rivers sweep  
Upon their purple tides the carnage to the deep."





THE HENRIADE.

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CANTO III.

## THE ARGUMENT.

The hero continues the history of the civil wars of France. The unfortunate death of Charles IX. Reign of Henry III. His character. That of the famous duke de Guise, known by the name of Balafre. Battle of Coutras. Murder of the duke de Guise. Extremities to which Henry III is reduced. Mayenne at the head of the League. D'Aumale the hero of it. Reconciliation of Henry III and Henry king of Navarre. Queen Elizabeth's answer to Henry of Bourbon.



## CANTO THE THIRD.

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“WHEN many a day (for thus the fates ordain’d)  
With blackest deeds of murder had been stain’d;  
When each assassin, cruel and abhorr’d,  
Fatigued with crimes, had sheathed his glutton sword;  
Those crimes at length the factious crowd alarm’d,  
Whom zeal had blinded, and their sovereign arm’d.  
As rage subsided, melting pity moved  
Each friend to virtue, who his country loved;  
That country’s voice awaken’d softer cares,  
And Charles himself relented at her tears.  
That early culture, by ill fate design’d  
To blast the fairer blossoms of his mind,  
Conscience subdued;—her whispering voice alone  
Can shake with terror the securest throne.  
Not all his mother’s principles could frame  
A heart like hers, insensible of shame.  
Severe remorse his anxious soul dismay’d,  
His strength was wasted, and his youth decay’d.  
Heaven mark’d him out, in vengeance for his crimes,  
A dread example to succeeding times.  
Myself<sup>1</sup> was present at his latest breath;

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<sup>1</sup> Charles IX was always in bad health after the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, and died at the expiration of two years, bathed in his own blood, which poured through the pores of his skin.

Henry IV witnessed the death of Charles IX, who summoned him to his bedside, notwithstanding the injuries which he had done to him, and com-

And still I shudder at that scene of death,  
 When, in return for tides of Gallic blood,  
 Each bursting vein pour'd forth the crimson flood.  
 Thus fell, lamented, in his early prime,  
 A youthful monarch bred to every crime,  
 From whose repentance we had hoped to gain  
 The balmy blessings of a milder reign.  
 Soon as he died, with speed advancing, forth  
 From the bleak bosom of the wint'ry north  
 Great Valois came, like some great orient star,  
 To claim his birthright in these realms of war.  
 On him Polonia<sup>1</sup> had bestow'd her throne,  
 Deem'd by each province worthy of the crown.  
 Great are the dangers of too bright a name :  
 E'en Valois fell a victim to his fame.  
 Though in his cause each danger I defy,  
 Could toil forever, and with transport die,  
 Yet, heaven-born Truth ! this tongue thy accents loves,  
 And only praises what the heart approves.  
 Soon was the race of all his greatness run ;  
 As morning vapors fly before the sun,  
 Oft have I mark'd these changes, often seen,  
 Heroes and kings become the weakest men :  
 Have seen the laurel'd prince, in battle brave,

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•   mitted his wife and daughter to him as to the natural heir to the crown, and as to a prince whose greatness of soul and fidelity he acknowledged. He warned him to distrust—but he pronounced this name, and some words which followed, so low as not to be heard by those in the chamber). “Sir, you must not say that,” said the queen-mother, who was present. “Why not say it?” replied Charles IX; “it is true.” It is probable that he spoke of Henry III, whose vices he knew, and whom he had regarded with horror ever since he had seen him delay his departure for Poland, in the hope that death would speedily assist him to the throne of France.—K.

<sup>1</sup> The reputation which he had acquired at Jarnac and at Moncontour, sustained by the money of France, caused him to be elected king of Poland, 1573. He succeeded Sigismond II, last prince of the race of the Jagellons.

Wear the soft chain, and live a courtier's slave.  
This fact by long experience have I known :  
Seeds of true courage in the mind are sown.  
Valois was form'd by heaven's peculiar care  
For martial prowess, and the deeds of war ;  
Yet was too weak the rod of power to wield,  
Though great in arms, and steady in the field.  
Detested minions show'd their artful skill,  
And reign'd supreme the sovereigns of his will.  
His voice, in truth, but utter'd their decrees ;  
While they, indulging in voluptuous ease,  
Drank of each joy which luxury supplies,  
And scorn'd to listen to a nation's cries.  
Unmoved, beheld afflicted France lament  
Her strength exhausted and her treasures spent.  
Beneath their yoke while Valois tamely bow'd,  
And new oppressions from new taxes flow'd,  
Lo, Guise<sup>1</sup> appears ! Ambition spurs him on ;  
All eyes are fix'd upon this rising sun.  
His deeds of war, the glory of his race,  
His manly beauty, and attractive grace ;  
But more than all, that happy, pleasing art,  
Which wins our love, and steals upon the heart,  
Subdued e'en those whom virtue faintly warms,  
And gain'd their wishes by resistless charms.  
None e'er like him could lead the mind astray,  
Or rule the passions with a sovereign sway.  
None e'er conceal'd from busy, curious eyes  
Their dark intentions in so fair disguise.  
Though proud ambition kindled in his soul,

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<sup>1</sup> Henry de Guise, the Balafré, was born, in 1550, of Francis de Guise and Anne d'Est. He executed the great project of the League, formed by the Cardinal de Lorraine, his uncle, in the time of the Council of Trent, and begun by Francis, his father.

His cooler judgment could that pride control.  
To gain the crowd, and win deserved esteem,  
Detested levies were his daily theme.  
Oft have they heard his flattering tongue declare  
The public sorrows were his only care.  
On modest worth he lavish'd all his store,  
Or clothed the naked, or enrich'd the poor.  
Oft would his alms prevent the starting tear,  
And tell, that Guise and charity were near.  
All arts were tried, which cunning might afford,  
To court the nobles whom his soul abhorr'd.  
Alike to virtue as to vice inclined,  
Or love, or endless hatred ruled his mind.  
He braved all dangers which on arms await,  
No chief more bold, none more oppress'd the State.  
When time, at length, had made his influence strong,  
And fix'd the passions of the giddy throng,  
Stripp'd of his mask, the daring traitor shone,  
Defied his sovereign, and attack'd the throne.  
Within our walls the fatal League began,  
From town to town throughout the realm it ran.  
Nursed by all ranks the hideous monster grew,  
Fattening on carnage, big with tyrants new.  
Two monarchs ruled o'er Gallia's hapless land :  
This held alone the shadow of command ;  
That widely spread fierce war's destructive flame,  
Master of all things save the royal name.  
Valois, awaked, the threatening danger sees,  
And quits the slumbers of lethargic ease.  
But still to ease and indolence a prey,  
His eyes are dazzled by the blaze of day.  
Though o'er his head the stormy thunders roll,  
Nor storms nor thunders rouse his sluggish soul.  
Sweet to his taste the streams of pleasure flow,



And sleep conceals the precipice below.  
Myself remain'd, the next succeeding heir,  
To save the monarch, or his ruin share.  
Eager I flew his weakness to supply ;  
Firmly resolved to conquer, or to die.  
But Guise, alas ! that sly, dissembling fiend,  
By craft deprived him of his truest friend.  
That old pretence through all revolving time,  
Divine religion, veil'd the horrid crime.  
The busy crowd fictitious virtue warm'd,  
With zeal inspired them, and with fury arm'd.  
Before their eyes in lively tints he drew  
That ancient worship, which their fathers knew.  
From new-born sects declared what ills had flow'd,  
And painted Bourbon as a foe to God.  
'Through all your climes, forbid it heaven !' he said,  
'His tenets flourish, and his errors spread.  
Yon walls, that cast a sacred horror round,  
Will soon be sunk, and levell'd with the ground.  
Soon will you see unhallow'd temples rise,  
And point their airy summits to the skies.  
So loved by Bourbon, so adored has been  
The curst example of Britannia's queen.'  
Scarce had he spoken, when the public fear  
Was swiftly wafted to the royal ear.  
Nay, more, the Leaguers issue Rome's decree,  
And curse the monarch that unites with me.  
Now was this arm prepared to strike the blow,  
Pour forth its strength, and thunder on the foe ;  
When Valois, won by subtle, dark intrigue,  
Fix'd on my ruin, and obey'd the League.  
Unnumber'd soldiers, arm'd in dread array,  
Fill'd every plain, and spoke the king's dismay.  
With grief I saw such jealousy disclosed,

Bewail'd his weakness, and his power opposed.  
Each city now was lavish of supplies;  
Each passing hour beheld new armies rise,  
Led on by fierce Joyeuse, and well-instructed Guise.  
Guise, form'd alike for prudence as for war,  
Dispersed my friends, and baffled all their care.  
Still undismay'd, such strength my valor boasts,  
I press'd through myriads of embattled hosts.  
Through all the field I fought the proud Joyeuse;<sup>1</sup>  
But stay,—the rest Eliza will excuse.  
More of that chief 'twere needless to relate,  
You know his rout, the gallant soldier's fate."

"Not so," the queen with eagerness replied:  
"Well hast thou spoken; modesty's thy guide;  
But deign to tell me what I wish to hear,  
Such themes are worthy of Eliza's ear:  
Joyeuse, his fall, in vivid colors draw;  
Go on, and paint thy conquest at Contras."  
Touch'd with these words, the hero bow'd his head;  
An honest blush his manly cheek o'erspread.  
Pausing awhile, the tale he thus led on,  
Yet wish'd the glory other than his own.  
"Of all, who Valois<sup>2</sup> could by flattery move,  
Who nursed his weakness, and enjoy'd his love,

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<sup>1</sup> The battle of Contras, between Anne, duke de Joyeuse, and Henry IV, then king of Navarre, took place October 20, 1587. The army of the former was compared with that of Darius, and the army of the latter with that of Alexander. Joyeuse was slain in the battle by two captains of infantry named Bordeaux and Descentiers.

<sup>2</sup> He had espoused the sister of the wife of Henry III. While ambassador to Rome he was treated as the brother of the king. He had a heart worthy of his great fortune. Having, one day, detained the two Secretaries of State too long in the ante-chamber of the king, he made apologies to them, and presented to them a gift of a hundred thousand crowns, which the king had just made to him.

Joyeuse, illustrious, best deserved to share  
The fairest sunshine of his royal care.  
If sullen Fate, with her unfavoring shears,  
Had not retrench'd the fillet of his years,  
In noble doings had his virtue shone,  
And Guise's greatness not excell'd his own.  
But vice o'er virtue gain'd superior force,  
Court was his cradle, luxury his nurse :  
Yet dared the amorous chieftain to oppose  
Unskilful valor to experienced foes.  
From Pleasure's downy lap the courtiers came  
To guard his person, and to share his fame.

“ In gay attire each gallant youth was drest ;  
Some cipher glitter'd on each martial vest—  
Some dear distinction, such as lovers wear,  
To tell the fondness of the yielding fair.  
The costly sapphire, or the diamond's rays,  
O'er their rich armor shed the vivid blaze.  
Thus deck'd by folly, thus elate and vain,  
These troops of Venus issued to the plain.  
Swift march'd their ranks, as tumult led the way,  
Unwisely brave, and impotently gay.  
In Bourbon's camp, disdaining empty show,  
Far other scenes were open'd to the view :  
An army, silent as the dead of night,  
Display'd its forces well inured to fight ;  
Men gray in arms, accustom'd, too, to bleed,  
Who bravely suffer'd in their country's need.  
The only graces that employ'd their care  
Were swords well-pointed, and the dress of war.  
Like them array'd, and steady to my trust,  
I led the squadrons cover'd o'er with dust.  
Like them, ten thousand deaths I dared to face,

Distinguish'd only by my rank and place.  
These eyes beheld the brilliant foe o'erthrown,  
Expiring legions, and the field our own.  
Deep in their breasts I plunged the fatal spear,  
And wish'd some Spanish bosom had been there.  
Still shall my tongue their honest praises tell;  
Firm in his post each youthful courtier fell,  
And bravely struggled to his latest breath  
Amid the terrors of surrounding death.  
Our silken sons of pleasure and of ease,  
Preserve their valor in the midst of peace.  
Call'd forth to war, they bravely scorn to yield—  
Servile at court, but heroes in the field.  
Joyeuse, alas! I tried in vain to save;  
None heard the orders which my mercy gave.  
Too soon I saw him sunk to endless night,  
Sustain'd by kind associates in the fight,  
A pale and breathless corse all ghastly to the sight.  
Thus some fair stem, whose opening flowers display  
Their fragrant bosoms to the dawn of day,  
Which decks the early scene, and fresh appears  
With Zephyr's kisses and Aurora's tears,  
Too soon decays, on Nature's lap reclined,  
Cropp'd by the scythe, or scatter'd by the wind.  
But why should memory recall to view  
Those horrid triumphs, now oblivion's due?  
Conquests so gain'd must ever cease to charm,  
While Gallic blood still blushes on my arm.  
Those beams of grandeur with false lustre shone,  
And tears bedew the laurels which I won.  
Unhappy Valois! that ill-fated day  
Brought down on thee dishonor and dismay.  
Paris grew proud, the League's submission less,  
And Guise's glory doubled thy distress.

Vimori's plains saw Guise<sup>1</sup> the sword unsheath ;  
Germania suffer'd for Joyeuse's death.  
Auneau beheld my army of allies  
Yield to his power, defeated by surprise.  
Through Paris' streets he march'd with haughty air,  
Array'd in laurels, and the pride of war.  
Even Valois tamely to his insults bow'd,  
And served this idol of the gazing crowd.  
Shame will at length the coolest courage warm,  
And give new vigor to the weakest arm :  
Such vile affronts made Valois less incline  
To offer incense at so mean a shrine.  
Too late he tried his greatness to restore,  
And reign the monarch he had lived before ;  
Now deem'd a tyrant by the factious crew,  
Nor loyal fear nor love his subjects knew.  
All Paris arms, sedition spreads the flame,  
And headstrong mutiny asserts her claim.  
Encircling troops raise high the hostile mound,  
Besiege his palace and his guards surround.  
Guise,<sup>2</sup> undisturb'd, amid the raging storm,  
Gave it a milder or severer form ;  
Ruled the mad tumult of rebellious spleen,  
And guided as he pleased the great machine.  
All had been lost, and Valois doom'd to die  
By one command, one glance of Guise's eye ;  
But when each arm was ready for the blow,  
Compassion soothed the fierceness of the foe ;

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<sup>1</sup> While the army of the king was beaten at Coutras, the Duke de Guise performed feats worthy of a very skilful general against a numerous army of foreign troops, sent to the assistance of Henry IV. After having harassed and fatigued them for a long time, he defeated them at the village of Auneau.

<sup>2</sup> The Duke de Guise, at the battle of the barricades, contented himself with sending back to Henry III his guards, after having disarmed them.



Enough were deem'd the terrors of the fight,  
 And meek-eyed pity gave the power of flight.  
 Guise greatly err'd, such subjects all things dare,  
 Their king must perish or themselves despair.  
 This day, confirm'd and strengthen'd in his schemes,  
 He saw that all was fatal but extremes;  
 Himself must mount the scaffold or the throne,  
 The lord of all things or the lord of none.  
 Through Gallia's realms adored, from conquest vain,  
 Aided by Rome and seconded by Spain;  
 Pregnant with hope and absolute in power,  
 He<sup>1</sup> thought those iron ages to restore,  
 When erst our kings in mouldering cloisters lived,  
 In early infancy of crowns deprived,  
 There secretly to weep the hours away,  
 While tyrants govern'd with oppressive sway.

"Valois, indignant at so high a crime,  
 Delay'd his vengeance to some better time.  
 Our States at Blois were summon'd to appear,  
 And Fame, no doubt, has told you what they were.  
 In barren streams from oratory's tongue  
 Smooth flow'd the tide of eloquence along;  
 Laws were proposed whose power none e'er perceived,  
 And ills lamented which none e'er relieved.

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<sup>1</sup> The Cardinal de Guise, one of the brothers of the Duke de Guise, said, more than once, that he should never die content, until he had the king's head between his knees to give him a monk's crown or tonsure. Madame de Montpensier, sister of the Guises, desired that her scissors might be made use of for this sacred purpose. Every one knows the device of Henry III; it was three crowns with these words: *Manet ultima Cælo*, for which the Leaguers substituted these: *Manet ultima claustro*. The following Latin lines which were affixed to the gates of the Louvre, are also well known:

"Qui dedit ante duas, unum abstulit; altera nutat;  
 Tertia tonsoris est facienda manu."



"Guise in the midst, with high imperious pride,  
 Was vainly seated by his sovereign's side.  
 Sure of success, he saw around the throne,  
 Or thought he saw, no subjects but his own.  
 These sons of infamy, this venal band,  
 Was ready to bestow the dear command,  
 When Valois' power was destined to appear,  
 Weary alike of mercy and of fear.  
 Each day his rival studied to attain  
 The mean, the odious triumphs of disdain ;  
 Nor deem'd that ever such a prince could show  
 Those stern resolves, which strike the assassin's blow.  
 Fate o'er his eyes with envious hand had spread  
 Her thickest veil's impenetrable shade.  
 The hour arrived when Guise was doom'd to bear  
 That lot of nature, which all mortals share.  
 With countless wounds<sup>1</sup> before the royal eye,

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<sup>1</sup> The Duke de Guise was killed on Friday, December 23, 1588, at eight o'clock in the morning. Historians say that he was seized with faintness in the ante-chamber of the king, on account of having spent the night with a lady of the court,—Madame de Noirmoutier, according to tradition. All who have written the story of his death, say that, as soon as he entered the council-chamber, he began to suspect his fate by the movements of those already assembled. D'Aubigné relates that he first encountered, in this chamber, d'Espinac, archbishop of Lyons, his confidant. The archbishop, who also had his suspicions, said to the duke, in presence of Larchant, captain of the guard: "This coat of yours is very thin for this weather; you should have taken care to have it more thickly lined." These words, pronounced in a tone which betrayed dread on the part of the speaker, confirmed the fears of the duke. He entered, however, a narrow passage in the king's chamber, which led to a cabinet, the door of which the king had walled up. The duke, ignorant that this door had been closed, lifted the tapestry which concealed it. In an instant a number of those Gascons, called the Forty-five, pierced him with poniards, with which the king himself had furnished them.

The assassins were la Bastide, Monsivry, Saint-Malin, Saint-Gaudin, Saint-Capautel, Halfrenas, Herbelade, with Lognac, their captain. Monsivry dealt the first blow; he was followed by Lognac, la Bastide, Saint-Malin, etc., who fell at the same time upon the duke.

There is still shown, in the Chateau de Blois, a stone in the wall against

The king ordain'd that haughty Guise should die.  
 All pale, and cover'd by the crimson tide,  
 This sun descended in his native pride.  
 The parting soul, by thirst of glory fired,  
 In life's last moment Valois' fear inspired.  
 Thus fell the mighty chief, in whom combined  
 Were foulest vices, virtues most refined.  
 With other conduct than to kings belongs,  
 Did Valois suffer, and revenge his wrongs.  
 Soon did the dire report through Paris spread,  
 That heaven was outraged, and that Guise was dead.  
 The young, the old, with unavailing sighs  
 Display'd their grief, and join'd their plaintive cries.  
 The softer sex invoked the powers above,  
 And clasp'd his statues in the arms of love.  
 And Paris thought her father, and her God,  
 Call'd loud for vengeance, and inspired to blood.  
 Amid the rest, the brave and valiant Mayne  
 Sought not their zealous fury to restrain ;  
 But, more by interest than resentment moved,  
 The flame augmented, and their zeal approved.

“Mayne,<sup>1</sup> under Guise inured to war's alarms,  
 Was nursed in battle, and train'd up to arms :

---

which he leaned in falling, and which was the first stained with his blood. Some Lorransians passing through Blois stopped to kiss this stone, and to scrape off, with their knives, some of its dust, which they carried away as a precious memento.

The death of the Cardinal de Guise, who was also killed at Blois, is not spoken of in the poem. The reason is obvious : the details of history are unfavorable to the unity of a poem, because the interest diminishes in proportion as it is divided. The Prince de Condé is not spoken of in the battle of Coutras, in order that the attention of the reader may not be withdrawn from Henry IV.

<sup>1</sup> The Duke de Mayenne, brother of the Balafré, had been, for a long time, jealous of his elder brother. He had all his great qualities, except his activity.

His brother's equal in each dark intrigue,  
 And now the lord and glory of the League.  
 Thus highly raised, thus eminently great,  
 He grieved no longer for his brother's fate ;<sup>1</sup>  
 But better pleased to govern than obey,  
 Forgot the loss, and wiped his tears away.  
 Mayne, with a soul to generous deeds inclined,  
 A statesman's cunning, with a hero's mind,  
 By subtle arts unnumber'd followers draws  
 To yield him homage, and to serve his laws.  
 Skilful e'en good from evil to produce,  
 Full well he knows their talents and their use.  
 Though brighter splendors dazzled all our eyes,  
 Not greater dangers ever rose from Guise.  
 To young Aumale,<sup>2</sup> and this more prudent guide,  
 The Leaguers owe their courage and their pride.  
 Aumale, the *Great Invincible* by name,  
 Is high exalted in the lists of fame.  
 Through all their ranks he spreads ambition's fires,  
 Presumptuous valor, and his own desires ;  
 Unshaken in their cause the League protects,  
 And bravely executes what Mayne directs.

" Meantime, the king, whose power the Flemings dread,  
 To deeds inhuman from his cradle bred,  
 That tyrant Catholic, that artful foe,

---

<sup>1</sup> In the great history of Mézeray, we read that the Duke de Mayenne was suspected of having written a letter to the king, in which he warned him to guard against his brother. This suspicion alone is sufficient ground for the character here given to the Duke de Mayenne, a character natural to an ambitious person, and especially to a leader of a party.

<sup>2</sup> The Chevalier d'Aumale, brother of the Duke d'Aumale, of the house of Lorraine, an impetuous young man, who possessed brilliant qualities, who was always at the head of sorties during the siege of Paris, and who inspired the inhabitants with his valor and boldness.

Incensed at Bourbon,<sup>1</sup> and Eliza too,  
Ambitious Philip sends his warlike train  
To aid our rivals, and the cause of Mayne.  
Rome,<sup>2</sup> best employ'd in making wars to cease,  
Lights Discord's torch, and bids her fires increase.  
The same fierce views the Christian father owns,  
Points the keen blade, and animates his sons.  
From Europe's either end the torrent falls ;  
Uniting sorrows burst upon our walls.  
Weak and defenceless in this evil hour,  
Valois relented, and implored my power.  
Humane benevolence my soul approves,  
The State commiserates, and Valois loves.  
Impending dangers banish all my ire,  
A brother's safety is my sole desire.  
With honest zeal I labor for his good :  
'Tis duty calls me, and the ties of blood  
I know the royal dignity my own,  
And vindicate the honors of the crown.  
Nor treaty made, nor hostage<sup>3</sup> ask'd, I came,  
And told him courage was his guide to fame.  
On Paris' ramparts bid him cast his eye,  
And there resolve to conquer or to die.  
These friendly words, thus happily applied,

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<sup>1</sup> Philip II, king of Spain, son of Charles V. He was called the Demon of the South—*DÆMONIUM MERIDIANUM*, because he troubled all Europe, in the south of which Spain is situated. He sent powerful succors to the League, with the design of causing the crown of France to pass to the infanta Clara Eugenia, or to some prince of his family.

<sup>2</sup> The court of Rome, gained by the Guises, and at that time submissive to Spain, did what it could to ruin France. Gregory XIII aided the League with men and money ; and Sixtus V began his pontificate by great, but, fortunately, most useless violence against the royal house, as may be seen in the remarks in the first canto.

<sup>3</sup> Henry IV, while king of Navarre, had the generosity to visit Henry III at Tours, attended only by a page, notwithstanding the suspicions and prayers of his old officers, who feared for him a second Saint-Bartholomew.

Through all his soul diffused a generous pride.  
 Manners thus changed, thus resolutely brave,  
 The sense of shame, and not example gave.  
 The serious lessons which misfortune brings,  
 Are needful often, and of use to kings."

Thus Henry spoke, with honesty of heart,  
 And begg'd for succors on Eliza's part.  
 Now from the towers where rebel Discord stood,  
 Conquest recalls him to her scenes of blood.  
 The flower of England follows to the plain,  
 And cleaves the bosom of the azure main.  
 Essex commands—the proud Iberian knows,  
 That Essex<sup>1</sup> conquers e'en the wisest foes—  
 And little thinks he that injurious Fate  
 Will blast his laurels with her keenest hate.  
 To France brave Henry hastens to repair,  
 Eager to grace the theatre of war.  
 "Go," said the queen, "thyself and virtue please ;  
 My troops attend thee o'er the azure seas.  
 For thee, not Valois, they endure the fight ;  
 Thy cares must guard them, and defend their right.  
 From thy example will they scorn to swerve ;  
 And rather seem to imitate than serve.  
 Who now the sword for valiant Bourbon draws  
 Will learn to triumph in Britannia's cause.  
 Oh ! may thy power the factious Leaguers quell,  
 And Mayne's allies thy gallant conquests feel !  
 Spain is too weak thy rebel foes to save,

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Devereux, earl of Essex, famous for his capture of Cadiz from the Spaniards, for the love of Elizabeth for him, and for his tragical death in 1601. He had taken Cadiz from the Spaniards, and had beaten them more than once upon the sea. Queen Elizabeth sent him to France in 1590, to the aid of Henry IV, at the head of five thousand men.



And Roman thunders never awe the brave.  
 Go, free mankind, and break the iron chains  
 Where Sixtus governs, or where Philip<sup>1</sup> reigns.  
 The cruel Philip, artful as his sire,  
 In all that views of interest may require,  
 Though less renown'd in war, less great and brave,  
 Division spreads in order to enslave ;  
 Forms in his palace each ambitious scheme,  
 And boundless triumphs are his darling theme.

“Lo ! Sixtus,<sup>2</sup> raised from nothing to the throne,  
 Designs no power above himself to own.  
 Montalto's shepherd monarchs he'd o'ercome,  
 And dictate laws in Paris, as at Rome.  
 Safe in the honors which adorn his brow,  
 To Philip and to all mankind a foe ;  
 As serves his cause, or insolent, or meek,  
 Rival of kings, and tyrant o'er the weak.  
 Through every clime, with faction at their head,  
 E'en to our court his dark intrigues have spread.  
 These mighty rulers fear not to defy ;  
 They both have dared Eliza's power to try ;  
 Witness, ye seas,<sup>3</sup> how Philip fought in vain

<sup>1</sup> Sixtus V, pope, had dared to excommunicate the King of France, and particularly Henry IV, then king of Navarre.

Philip II, king of Spain, grand protector of the League.

<sup>2</sup> Sixtus V, born at Grottes, in the march of Ancona, of a poor vine-dresser, named Peretti, was a man whose turbulence equalled his dissimulation. While a Franciscan friar, he beat to death the nephew of his provincial, and embroiled himself with the whole order. While inquisitor at Venice he got into trouble, and was obliged to fly. While cardinal, he composed in Latin the bull of excommunication launched by Pius V against Queen Elizabeth. Nevertheless, he esteemed this queen, and called her *UN GRAN CERVELLO DI PRINCIPESSA*.

<sup>3</sup> This event was quite recent : for Henry IV is supposed to see Elizabeth in 1589 ; and it was the year preceding that the great fleet of Philip II, destined for the conquest of England, was beaten by Admiral Drake, and scattered by the tempest.



With English valor, and the stormy main.  
These shores beheld the proud Armada lost ;  
Yon purple billows bore the floating host.  
Rome's pontiff still in quiet silence bears  
The loss of conquest, and our greatness fears.

“ Display thy banners in the martial field ;  
When Mayne is conquer'd, Rome herself will yield.  
Though proud when fortune smiles, her own defeat  
Lays her submissive at the victor's feet.  
Prompt to condemn, and eager to absolve,  
Her flames and thunders wait on thy resolve.”

---

A specious criticism upon this passage appeared in the *Journal of Trévoux*. It was not, says this journal, like Queen Elizabeth to believe that Rome could be complaisant to earthly potentates, since Rome had dared to excommunicate her father. But the critic did not think that the pope had excommunicated the King of England, Henry VIII, only because he was more in dread of Charles V. It is not the only fault in this extract of Trévoux, whose author, disapproved and condemned by the greater part of his confreres, has put into his censures, perhaps, more abuse than reason.



THE HENRIADE.

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CANTO IV.

## THE ARGUMENT.

D'Aumale is upon the point of being master of Henry the Third's camp, when the hero, returning from England, engages the Leaguers and changes the fortune of the day.

Discord comforts Mayne, and flies to Rome for succors. Description of Rome. Discord meets with Policy. She returns with her to Paris, causes an insurrection of the Sorbonne; animates the Sixteen against the Parliament, and arms the Monks. Troubles and confusion in Paris.

## CANTO THE FOURTH.

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WHILE thus sequester'd from the train of state,  
Their glorious interests sagely they debate,  
At leisure o'er the princely science stray,  
Combat and conquest and imperial sway ;  
The Seine with terror saw the chiefs, combined,  
Spread on his banks their banners to the wind.

Anxious the king, from Henry distant far,  
Bewail'd the uncertain destiny of war ;  
His cheering aid, irresolute, he needs,  
For victory follows still where Bourbon leads.  
With triumph the confederate bands beheld  
His weak dismay, and eager sought the field ;  
D'Aumale the haughty, Nemours and Brissac,  
Free souled Saint Paul, la Châtre, Canillac,  
Rebellious chieftains, fill'd with fresh alarms  
The royal witness of their conquering arms,  
And prone to change, and hasty to repent,  
He mourns his absence, whom himself had sent.

Long, with these traitors to their lawful lord,  
Joyeuse's young brother<sup>1</sup> drew the factious sword ;

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<sup>1</sup> Henry, count de Bouchage, younger brother of the Duke de Joyeuse, slain at Coutras.

One morning, at four o'clock, while passing the convent of the Capuchins, on his way to Paris, after spending the night in a debauch, he imagined that he heard the angels singing matins in the convent. Struck

By turns a soldier and a saint was he,  
Now bent on arms, and now a devotee,—  
Preferr'd, as when inclined his various soul,  
He took, resign'd, resumed the helmet and the cowl.  
He left the scenes of penitence and tears  
To bark sedition in the Leaguers' ears,  
And bathed remorseless in his country's blood,  
The hand just then devoted to his God.

Of all the chiefs, for valor most renown'd,  
Whose prowess shed despair and horror round,  
Whose puissant arms the boldest might appall,  
The first in feats of glory was D'Aumale.  
Sprung from the far-famed heroes of Lorraine,  
King, laws, and peace alike were his disdain ;  
The noblest youths his daring steps pursue,  
With them incessant to the field he flew—  
Now in still march, now shouting from afar,  
By day, by night, he urged the various war,  
Assail'd the unguarded foe on every side,  
And with their blood the dusty champaign dyed.  
So from proud Athos or Imaus height,  
Where earth, sea, air, lie stretch'd before the sight,  
With headlong speed the rapid eagle flies,  
And vultures dart along the gloomy skies ;  
With hungry beaks the feather'd spoil they rend,  
Resistless on the bleating flocks descend,

---

with this idea, he became a Capuchin, under the name of Brother Angel. Afterwards, he quitted his habit, and took up arms against Henry IV. The Duke de Mayenne made him governor of Languedoc, duke and peer, and marshal of France. Finally he effected a reconciliation with the king ; but this prince being one day with him on a balcony, under which a great many people were assembled, Henry IV said to him, "My cousin, these people seem very glad to see an apostate and a renegade together." This speech caused Joyeuse to re-enter his convent, where he died.





And soaring to their airy cliffs, convey,  
With screams of cruel joy, the living prey.

Fired, on a time, and frantic with the thirst  
Of glory, to the royal tent he pierced ;  
Dark was the night and sudden the surprise ;  
Throughout the camp a direful panic flies,  
And like a torrent that o'erleaps its bound,  
His arms victorious threaten all around.  
But when the morning star began to burn,  
Came Mornay to announce his lord's return ;  
With joyful speed the impatient chief drew near,  
When the rough din smote loudly on his ear.  
Amazed he flies, sees terror and distress  
In the king's troops, nor e'en in Bourbon's less.  
"And are you vanquish'd, and is this," he cried,  
"Is this the glorious welcome you provide  
For Henry, for your Henry?" At that name  
Their hearts were flush'd again with valor's flame.  
So when the Sabin arms drove trembling home,  
E'en to the capitol, the bands of Rome,  
His guardian God their mighty founder hail'd,  
And in the name of Stator Jove prevail'd.  
"Let him," they cry, "let Henry lead the fight,  
And we must conquer in our Henry's sight."  
Keen as the flash, that cleaves the stormy cloud,  
In the mid-camp the dazzling hero stood.  
Impetuous to the foremost ranks he flies,  
Death in his hand, and lightning in his eyes.  
The ambitious chiefs crowd fast around his shield :  
At once he shifts the fortune of the field.  
His stern approach the pale confederates shun,  
As stars diminish'd fade before the sun.  
D'Aumale, enraged, tries every art, in vain,

To rally their disorder'd files again ;  
His voice awhile their timorous flight withheld,  
But Henry's drove them headlong o'er the field.  
His awful front strikes terror through the foe,  
Their chief unites them, but their fears o'erthrow,  
Till e'en D'Aumale, reluctant borne along,  
Obeys the o'erwhelming torrent of the throng.  
Encumber'd thus with many a winter's snow,  
Some rock forsakes the mountain's lofty brow,  
And, wrapt in sheets of ice, rolls o'er the vale below.

He shows to the besieging powers around  
His front, so long with matchless glory crown'd ;  
Bursts through the armèd crowd, and, loathing life,  
Seeks in despair once more the mortal strife ;  
Restrains awhile the victor's rapid course,  
Till weak, and baffled by superior force,  
Each moment he expects the fatal meed,  
Death, the just wages of his hardy deed.

But Discord, for her darling chief afraid,  
Flies swift to save him, for she needs his aid.  
Between her champion and the foe she held  
Her massy, broad, impenetrable shield,  
Whose sight, or rage, or terror can convey,  
Omen of death, and meteor of dismay.  
Offspring of Hell ! from her infernal cave  
Then first she came, to succor and to save ;  
Then first her hand, dire instrument of death,  
Redeem'd from instant fate a hero's breath.  
Forth from the field, her votary, cover'd o'er  
With wounds, unfelt amid his toil, she bore,  
His anguish with a lenient hand allay'd,  
And staunch'd the blood that in her cause was shed.

But while her labors to his limbs impart  
Their wonted health, her venom taints his heart.  
Thus tyrants oft, with treacherous pity, stay  
The wretch's doom, and spare but to betray ;  
Act by his arm the purpose of their hate,  
And that accomplish'd, yield him to his fate.

Bold to achieve, nor fraught with wisdom less  
To catch the auspicious moment of success,  
Victorious Henry urged the important blow,  
And with new fury press'd the astonish'd foe.  
Close in their walls their dire disgrace they mourn,  
And dread the assault, and tremble in their turn.  
Even Valois now, to martial deeds inspired  
The troops, himself, by Henry's actions fired,  
Laughs at all pain, despises all alarms,  
And owns e'en toil and danger have their charms.  
No secret feuds the jarring chiefs confound,  
Their brave attempts are all with glory crown'd ;  
Horror, where'er they march, their way prepares ;  
The ramparts tremble, and the foe despairs.

Where now shall Mayne, deep sorrowing, seek redress ?  
His troops, a people groaning in distress !  
The weeping orphan here her sire demands ;  
There brethren claim their brother at his hands ;  
Each mourns the present, dreads the future most,  
And disaffection rends the murmuring host.  
Some counsel flight, surrender some prefer,  
But all unanimous renounce the war ;  
So light the feeble vulgar, and so near  
Their headstrong rashness is allied to fear.  
Their ruin he beheld already wrought ;  
A thousand plans perplex his laboring thought ;

When Discord, by her snaky locks confess'd,  
Stood forth reveal'd, and thus the chief address'd :

“August descendant of an awful line,  
Whose vengeful cause unites thee firm to mine ;  
Form'd by my counsel, nursed beneath my care,  
Know thy protectress, and her voice revere !  
Shall wretches base as these thy fears excite ?  
Who freeze with horror at a loss so slight.  
Slaves of my power, and vassals of my will,  
Even now our great designs they shall fulfil ;  
Let but my breath their dastard bosoms fire,  
They court the combat, and with joy expire.”

She spoke, and rapid as the lightning's flight,  
Glanced through the clouds, and vanish'd from his sight.  
Around the French she saw confusion lower,  
And hail'd the sight, and bless'd the welcome hour ;  
The teeming earth grew barren as she pass'd,  
And the bright blossoms wither'd at the blast ;  
Flat in the furrow lay the blighted ear,  
The heavens grew black, the very stars look'd drear—  
Beneath her burst the thunder's sullen sound,  
And death-like horror seized the nations round.

Dark scowling o'er the flowery vales below,  
A whirlwind snatch'd her to the banks of Po.

Towards Rome, at length, her baleful eye she roll'd,  
Rome, the world's dread, and Discord's fane of old—  
Imperial Rome, by destiny design'd,  
In peace, in war, the mistress of mankind.  
By conquest first she stretch'd her wide domain,  
And all earth's monarchs wore her galling chain ;

On arms alone her solid empire grew,  
And the world crouch'd where'er her eagle flew.  
More peaceful art her modern rule supports,  
Now e'en her conquerors tremble in her courts;  
Deep rooted in their hearts her power she sees,  
And needs no thunder but her own decrees.

High on that gorgeous wreck of ancient war,  
Where Mars, for ages, drove his rattling car,  
A pontiff now maintains his priestly state,  
And fills the throne where once the Cæsars sate.  
There wandering, heedless of the mighty dead,  
Monastic feet on Cato's ashes tread,  
On God's own altar there the throne they raise,  
And one despotic hand the cross and sceptre sways.

There first His infant Church the Almighty placed,  
By turns with zeal rejected, or embraced;  
There Heaven's high will His first apostle taught,  
In native truth and singleness of thought.  
Nor his successors meaner praise acquired,  
And they were honor'd most, who least aspired;  
No foppery then their modest brow adorn'd,  
All praise but virtue; wealth by all was scorn'd;  
They flew with rapture from their low abode,  
To die triumphant in the cause of God.  
Depraved, at length, they scorn'd their humble state,  
And Heaven, for man's offences, made them great;  
Ambition then profaned the sacred shrine,  
And human power was grafted on divine;  
The lurking dagger and the poisoning bowl,  
Were the dark basis of their new control.  
Vicegerents of the Lord, his holy place  
With brutal lust they blush'd not to disgrace,



'Till Rome, oppress'd beneath their hateful reign,  
 Sigh'd for her gods and pagan rites again.  
 A wiser race more modern times beheld,  
 Who crimes like these or wrought not, or conceal'd :  
 Then kings appeal'd to Rome's<sup>1</sup> decisive power,  
 And chose their umpire, whom they fear'd before.  
 Humility once more and meekness shone  
 Renew'd, beneath the proud pontific crown.  
 To govern mankind in these later days,  
 Is Rome's chief virtue, and her worthiest praise.

Now in the pomp of apostolic state  
 Supreme, and crown'd with empire, Sixtus sate ;<sup>2</sup>  
 If fraud and churlish insolence might claim  
 Renown, no monarch bore a fairer name.  
 Long time he skulk'd beneath the driveller's part  
 Disguised, and owed his greatness to his art ;  
 Long seem'd unworthy what he sigh'd to gain,  
 And shunn'd it long, the surer to obtain.

Deep in his palace, secret and unseen,  
 Dwelt dark-veil'd Policy, mysterious queen ;  
 Unsocial Interest and Ambition join'd,  
 Of yore, to spawn this pest of human kind.  
 Her smiles a free untroubled soul express'd,  
 Though cares unnumber'd swarm'd within her breast ;  
 Keen were her haggard eyes, nor knew to close  
 Their wakeful lids, nor would admit repose.  
 Thick woven films o'er Europe's sight she spreads,

<sup>1</sup> See *History of the Popes*.

<sup>2</sup> Sixtus V, while Cardinal Montalto, counterfeited imbecility so well, for the space of about fifteen years, that he was commonly called *The Ass of Ancona*. It is well known how artfully he obtained the papal chair, and how haughtily he reigned.



Confounds her counsels, and her kings misleads ;  
 Calls truth itself to testify a fraud,  
 And stamps imposture with the seal of God.

When first the phantom Discord met her view,  
 With instant rapture to her arms she flew ;  
 Then smiled a ghastly grin, but sighing soon,  
 As one o'erwhelm'd with sorrow, thus begun :  
 "I see, alas ! those happy times no more,  
 When thoughtless multitudes adored my power—  
 When Europe, credulous, obey'd my laws,  
 And mix'd with mine religion's sacred cause.  
 I spoke, and kings from their exalted seat  
 Came trembling down, and worshipp'd at my feet ;  
 High on the echoing Vatican I stood,  
 And breathed my wars, and launch'd my storms abroad.  
 E'en life and death confess'd my proud domain,  
 And monarchs reign'd by me, or ceased to reign.  
 Now France<sup>1</sup> subdues my lightnings, e'er they fly,  
 And, quench'd and smother'd, in my grasp they die.  
 Religion's friend, she thwarts my slighted arms,  
 And breaks my philters, and dispels my charms ;  
 Truth's borrow'd guise in vain did I display,  
 She first discern'd, and tore the mask away.  
 But oh ! what joy ! could I delude her now,  
 At least avenge my sufferings on my foe.  
 Come then, my lightnings, with thy torch restore,  
 And France shall feel us, and the world once more ;

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<sup>1</sup> In 1570, the parliament issued a famous proclamation against the bull *In Cœna Domini*.

All are familiar with its celebrated remonstrances under Louis XI on the subject of pragmatic sanction ; with those which it made to Henry III against the scandalous bull of Sixtus V, which called the reigning house a *generation of bastards*, and with its constant firmness in sustaining our liberties against the pretensions of the court of Rome.

Our bonds, again, earth's haughty lords shall wear,  
Again"—she spoke, and pierced the yielding air.

Remote from Rome, where vanity and pride  
In temples sacred to themselves reside,  
Conceal'd from sight, within her humble cell,  
Religion, pensive maid, delights to dwell.  
There angels hover round her calm abode,  
And waft her raptures to the throne of God.  
Meanwhile, the sanction of her injured name,  
The oppressor's wrong and tyrant's fury claim;  
Yet, doom'd to suffer, no revenge she knows,  
But melts in silent blessings on her foes:  
Her artless charms their modest lustre shroud  
Forever from the vain tumultuous crowd,  
Who without faith their impious vows prefer,  
And pray to Fortune, while they kneel to her.  
In Henry she beheld her future son,  
And knew the Fates had mark'd him for her own; ✓  
With sighs to speed the destined hour she strove,  
And view'd and watch'd him with a seraph's love.

Sudden the fiends their awful foe surprise;  
The captive lifts to heaven her streaming eyes;  
In vain,—for heaven, to prove her virtue sure  
And stedfast faith, resigns her to their power.  
Soon, in her snowy veil and holy weeds,  
The monsters muffle their detested heads,  
Then, fired with hope, and glorying in their might,  
Stretch swift to Paris their impetuous flight.

Deep in the Sorbonne, in august debate,  
The sage expounders of heaven's dictates sate.  
Their faith unshaken, loyalty unfeign'd,

The judges and the examples of the land ;  
 Sway'd by no error, by no fear controll'd,  
 Each bore an upright heart, was masculine and bold.  
 Alas! what human virtue never errs,—  
 Behold the tempter! Policy appears ;  
 Smooth was the melting flattery of her tongue,  
 And on her artful lips persuasion hung.  
 The dazzling mitre and the sweeping train,  
 With ease allure the ambitious and the vain ;  
 With secret bribes the miser's voice she buys,  
 With decent praise, the learnèd and the wise ;  
 From each his virtue by some art she stole,  
 And shook with sounding threats the coward's soul.

Their counsels now with riot they disgrace,  
 Truth heard the din, alarm'd, and fled the place.  
 When thus a sage the general voice express'd :  
 "Kings are the creatures of the Church confess'd ;  
 Chastised or pardon'd, as her laws decree :  
 That Church, and guardians of those laws, are we ;  
 Annull'd and cancell'd are the vows<sup>1</sup> we swore :  
 Such is our will, and Valois reigns no more."  
 Scarce was the cursed decree pronounced aloud,  
 When ruthless Discord copied it in blood,  
 And sign'd and sworn the fatal record stood.

Then swift from church to church, with eager speed,

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<sup>1</sup> On the seventh of January, 1589, the Theologic Faculty of Paris published the famous decree by which it declared that the subjects were released from their oath of fidelity, and could legitimately make war against the king. Le Fevre, a dean, and some of the wisest of them, refused to sign this decree. As soon as the Sorbonne was free, it revoked this decree, which the tyranny of the League had torn from some of the members of its body. All the religious orders that, like the Sorbonne, had declared against the royal house, like it retracted. But if the house of Lorraine had held the supremacy, would they have retracted?

The fiend divulges their adventurous deed ;  
Where'er she came her saintly garb bespoke  
Esteem, and sage and holy was her look.  
Forth from their gloomy cells she calls amain  
The meager slaves of voluntary pain ;  
" Behold in me Religion's self," she cries ;  
" Assert my rights and let your zeal arise ;  
'Tis I approach you, 'tis my voice you hear ;  
For proof, mark well the flaming sword I bear.  
Of temper'd lightning is that edge divine,  
And God's own hand intrusted it to mine.  
Emerge, my children, from this silent gloom,  
The time for action now and high exploit is come.  
Go forth, and teach the lukewarm, wavering crowd,  
To slay their king, if they would serve their God.  
Think how the ministry by special grace  
Was given of old to Levi's holy race ;  
Jehovah's self pronounced that glory due  
To their deserts, when Israel's sons they slew.  
Where are, alas ! those times of triumph fled,  
When by the brother's arm the victim bled ?  
Ye priests devout, your spirit was their guide,  
'Twas by your hands alone Coligni died ;  
'Twas then the slaughter raged—go forth, explain  
My voice abroad, and let it rage again."

She spoke, and waved the signal ; every heart  
Throbb'd with the poison of the beldam's art.  
To Paris next their solemn march she led,  
High o'er the midst the banner'd<sup>1</sup> cross was spread ;

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<sup>1</sup> As soon as Henry III and the King of Navarre appeared in arms before Paris, the greater part of the monks put on the cuirass, and performed military duty with the citizens. In this part of the poem, however, allusion is made to the procession of the League, wherein twelve hundred

And hymns and holy songs they chant aloud,  
 As if by heaven their cause had been avow'd.  
 E'en on their knees their frenzy they declare,  
 And mix a pious curse in every prayer :  
 Bold in the pulpit, timorous in the field,  
 With uncouth arm the ponderous sword they wield ;  
 Their penitential shirts the zealots hide  
 Beneath their canker'd armor's clumsy pride ;  
 And thus the inglorious band in foul array  
 Through tides of gazing rabble sped their way,  
 While high in effigy portray'd they bore  
 Their God, the God of peace, their crazy troop before.

Mayne with the pomp of public praise adorn'd  
 Their wild attempt, which in his heart he scorn'd ;  
 For well he knew fanatic rage would pass  
 For sound religion with the common class ;  
 Nor wanted he the princely craft to court  
 And soothe the follies of the meaner sort.  
 The soldier laugh'd, the sage with frowns survey'd  
 Their antic pageantry, and mad parade,  
 "The many rend the skies with loud applause,"  
 And hail the reverend bulwarks of their cause.  
 Their daring rashness first to fear gave way,  
 And frenzy now succeeds to their dismay.  
 The spirit thus, that rules the obedient main,  
 Can lull the waves to rest, or wake the storm again.

Now Discord<sup>1</sup> from the tribe of Valois' foes,

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monks passed in review in Paris, having Guillaume Rose, bishop of Senlis, at their head. This fact has been placed here, although it did not take place until after the death of Henry III.

<sup>1</sup> It must not be inferred that there were but sixteen seditious individuals, as related by the Abbé Legendre in his small *History of France*, but they were called the Sixteen from the circumstance of their controlling



Twice eight, the rankest of the faction, chose ;  
 Slaves of the queen, who yet presumed to guide  
 The car of state, like monarchs at her side,  
 While Pride and Perfidy, Revenge and Death,  
 With streams of slaughter mark'd the road beneath.  
 Mayne blush'd to see the paltry minions stand  
 So near himself, his equals in command :  
 But fellowship in guilt all rank destroys,  
 As great the wretch who serves,<sup>1</sup> as who employs.  
 So when the winds, fierce tyrants of the deep,  
 The Seine or Rhone with rapid fury sweep,  
 Black rises from below the stagnant mud,  
 And stains the silver surface of the flood.  
 So when the flames some destined town invade,  
 And on the plain the smoking towers are spread,  
 The mingling metals in one mass are roll'd,  
 And worthless dross incrusts the purest gold.

Themis alone, uninfluenced by their crimes,  
 Escapes the foul contagion of the times ;  
 With her, nor hope of power nor fear prevail,  
 But still well poised she trimm'd the steady scale ;  
 No spots the lustre of her shrine impair,  
 But justice finds a sacred refuge there.

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sixteen quarters of Paris by means of their emissaries. They at first placed at their head sixteen of the most factious of their body. The most noted were Bussi-le-Clerc, governor of the Bastile ; la Bruyère, lieutenant ; the commissary Louchart ; Emmonot and Morin, attorneys ; Oudinet, Passart, and above all, Senault, clerk of the parliament, a man of great intellect, who first developed the obscure and dangerous question concerning the power which a nation has over its king. I will say, in passing, that Senault was the father of P. J. F. Senault, that eloquent man who died general of the priests of the Oratory in France.

<sup>1</sup> The Sixteen were, for a long time, independent of the Duke de Mayenne. One of them named Normand, said, one day, in the chamber of the duke : "Those who made him could very easily unmake him."



There, foes to vice, and equity their guide,  
An awful senate o'er the laws preside,  
With patriot candor watchful to secure  
The people's privilege and monarch's power;  
True to the crown yet anxious for the State,  
Tyrants alike and rebels are their hate ;  
Firm their allegiance still, though free and brave,  
They scorn to link the subject to the slave.  
Rome and the Roman power, full well they know,  
Know to respect it, and to curb it too.

Chosen from the League, a furious troop beset  
The portal, and invade the still retreat :  
Bussy, than whom no chief might better claim  
That bad pre-eminence, their leader came ;  
And thus the ruffian, proud of the command  
He bore, bespoke the venerable band :

“ Ye, who for pay the law's vile drudgery bear,  
And doze and dream, plebeians as you are,  
Of kings committed to your guardian care,—  
Yet still when public feuds and broils prevail,  
Hold the mean trapping of your rank for sale,—  
Timorous in war, in peace a blustering train,  
Hear what your lords, the commonwealth, ordain.  
Societies were form'd ere kings were made ;  
We claim the rights our ancestors betray'd ;  
The people, whom your arts enslaved before,  
Discern the cheat, and will be slaves no more.  
Truce with the pomp of titles then, away  
With every sound of arbitrary sway,  
Judge in the people's name, and be alone  
Friends of the State, not bondsmen of the throne.”

He spoke, and scorn appear'd in every eye;  
 Nor censure else vouchsafed they, or reply.  
 So when of old, within her ruin'd wall,  
 Rome in dismay received the conquering Gaul,  
 Undaunted still her awful senate sate,  
 Calm as in peace, nor trembled at their fate.

“Tyrants,” he cried with fury, though not free  
 From secret dread, “obey or follow me.”  
 Then, famed for worth and fearless of his foes,  
 Their honor'd chief, illustrious Harlay rose,  
 And claim'd his fetters with so stern a tone,  
 As for their hands he sought them, not his own.  
 At once his hoary brethren of the laws,  
 Ambitious victims in the royal cause,  
 And proud to share their Harlay's glorious pains,  
 With outstretch'd arms<sup>1</sup> received the traitor's chains.  
 Repeat, O Muse! those names by France e'er bless'd,  
 Those men enshrine whom lawlessness oppress'd;  
 The virtuous Thou,<sup>2</sup> Scarron, Molé, Bayeul,

<sup>1</sup> On the 16th of January, 1589, Bussi-le-Clere, one of the Sixteen, who, from a fencing-master, became governor of the Bastile, and chief of this faction, entered the chamber of parliament, followed by fifty satellites, and presented a request, or rather an order that this body should no longer recognize the royal house. On their refusing to comply, he took all those who were opposed to his party to the Bastile, and there kept them on bread and water, in order to oblige them to ransom themselves sooner from his hands. It was for this reason that he was called the grand penitentiary of the parliament.

<sup>2</sup> Augustin de Thou, second of the name, was the uncle of the celebrated historian.

Molé can be no other than the Edouard Molé, member of parliament, who died in 1634.

Scarron was the great-grandfather of the famous Scarron, so well known by his poetical writings and by his wit.

Bayeul was the uncle of the superintendent of finances.

Nicholas Potier de Novion de Blaneménil, president of the parliament, received the name of Blaneménil from an estate so called, which afterwards fell to the house of Lamoignon, by the marriage of his grand-daughter with

That just man Potier, and the young Longueil !  
 The gathering multitude around them roars,  
 And crowds attend them to those dreary towers,<sup>1</sup>  
 Where vengeance, undistinguishing in blood,  
 Too oft confounds the guilty and the good.

Thus sinks the State beneath their lawless power,  
 The Sorbonne's fallen, the senate is no more.  
 But why this throng ? that universal yell ?  
 The fatal scaffold, and the torturing wheel ?  
 Say for whose punishment this pomp design'd ?  
 For theirs—the first, the noblest of mankind.  
 So fare the just in Paris, such reward  
 For patriots here and heroes is prepared.  
 Brisson !<sup>2</sup> Larcher ! Tardif ! no shame invades

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President de Lamoignon. Nicholas Potier was not, in fact, taken to the Bastille with the other members of parliament, because, on that day, he was not in the chamber ; but he was a prisoner in the Louvre at the time Brisson suffered death. A similar fate was resolved upon for him. He was accused of holding secret correspondence with Henry IV. The Sixteen proceeded against him in a formal manner, in order that there might be some show of justice on their side, and that the people might not be startled by precipitated executions, which were regarded as assassinations.

At last, as Blanménil was about to be condemned to be hung, the Duke de Mayenne returned to Paris. This prince had always entertained for him a veneration which could not be refused to his virtue ; he went in person to take him from the prison. Blanménil fell on his knees before him, and said : “ My lord, I am indebted to you for my life ; but I must ask a still greater benefit ; it is to permit me to go to Henry IV, my lawful sovereign. I shall regard you all my life as my benefactor, but I cannot serve you as my master.” The Duke de Mayenne, touched by this speech, raised him, embraced him, and sent him to Henry IV. The narrative of this adventure, with the examination of Blanménil, are still among the papers of the present President de Novion.

Bussi-le-Clere had been at first a fencing-master, and subsequently a lawyer. When chance and the evils of the times had given him some credit, he took the surname of Bussi, as if he had been as redoubtable as the famous Bussi d'Amboise. He caused himself, moreover, to be called Bussi Grande-Puissance.

<sup>1</sup> The Bastille.

<sup>2</sup> On Friday, November 15, 1591, Barnabé Brisson, a very learned man who performed the duties of first president in the absence of Achille de

Your honest fame, nor blush your injured shades ;  
Your fate was glorious, and whoc'er like you  
Dies for his king, shall die with glory too.

O'erjoy'd, meanwhile, and revelling in blood,  
Amid her bands triumphant Discord stood.  
Self-satisfied, with well-contented air,  
She saw the dire effects of civil war ;  
Saw thousands leagued against their monarch's life,  
Yet even themselves divided and at strife,  
Dupes of her power, and servants of her hate,  
Push the mad war, and urge their country's fate ;  
Tumult within, and danger all without,  
While havoc smote the realm, and march'd it round about.

---

Harlay, with Claude Larcher and Jean Tardif, were hung from a beam in the little Chatelet, by order of the Sixteen. It should be observed that Hamilton, pastor of Saint-Côme, a furious Leaguer, arrested Tardif in his own house, having with him a number of priests, who served as guards.

THE HENRIADE.

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CANTO V.

## THE ARGUMENT.

The besieged are very sharply pressed. Discord persuades Clement to go to Paris, and assassinate the king. He is conducted by Fanaticism, whom Discord calls for that purpose from the infernal regions. Sacrifice of the Leaguers to the spirits of Darkness. Henry III is assassinated. Sentiments of Henry IV upon the occasion. He is acknowledged king of France by the army.



## CANTO THE FIFTH.

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Now marching on, those dread machines appear'd,  
Which death attended, and the rebels fear'd.  
A hundred mouths pour'd forth the rapid balls,  
And iron tempests rattled on the walls.  
Now were employ'd with skill, but all in vain,  
The zeal of party and the wiles of Mayne.  
The guards of Paris, and the noisy crowd,  
The prating doctors, insolent and loud,  
Tried, but in vain, our hero to subdue,  
Beneath whose feet victorious laurels grew.  
By Rome and Philip were the thunders hurl'd ;  
But Rome diffused no terrors through the world.  
His native sloth the old Iberian show'd,  
And all his succors were too late bestow'd.  
Through Gallia's realms the plundering troops enjoy'd  
The spoils of cities, which their arms destroy'd.  
An easy conquest o'er oppress'd allies  
Was first, and fairest in the traitor's eyes.  
The falling League but waited to receive  
Whate'er the pride of tyranny could give,  
When Fate, that governs with supreme command,  
Appear'd suspended by a zealot's hand.

Forgive, ye citizens, whose peaceful days  
Are calm, and brighten'd by serener rays—

Forgive the bard who paints the horrid crimes  
That stain'd the annals of preceding times.  
Yourselves unsullied may the lays approve,  
Whose hearts are warm with loyalty and love.

In every age, some venerable seer,  
For heaven's pure joys has shed the pious tear ;  
Some rigid anchorites, with vows divine,  
Have heap'd their incense on religion's shrine :  
Lost to the world, to each idea lost  
That friendship loves, or charity can boast.  
Their gloomy shades, and cloisters ever rude,  
The beams of fair humanity exclude.  
Others in flowing periods have display'd  
Religion's truths by learning's powerful aid.  
In some, ambition has produced desires  
Mean, and unworthy virtue's sacred fires.  
Oft have their schemes extended far and wide,  
And all their piety been sunk in pride.  
Thus by perverse, untoward abuses, still,  
The highest good becomes the greatest ill.  
Those who the life of Dominic<sup>1</sup> embraced,  
In Spain with wreaths of glory have been graced ;  
From mean employments where they toil'd unknown,  
Have reach'd the very footsteps of the throne.  
In France they flourish'd, in the days of yore,  
With equal zeal, but far unequal power.  
The kindly patronage, from kings derived,  
Might still attend them had not Clement lived.  
The soul of Clement,<sup>2</sup> gloomy, and austere,

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<sup>1</sup> Dominic, who was born at Calahorra, in Aragon, founded the order of the Dominicans in 1215.

<sup>2</sup> Jacques Clement, of the order of the Dominicans, and a native of Sorbonne, a village near Sens, was twenty-four and a half years of age, and

Was form'd to virtues rigid, and severe :  
Soon as the torrent of rebellion flow'd,  
The tide he follow'd, and pronounced it good.  
Fell Discord rising, had profusely shed  
Infernal poisons o'er his youthful head.  
The long-drawn aisle, and venerable shrine  
Witness what prayers fatigued the Power Divine.  
This was their form, before the throne of grace,  
While dust and ashes sanctified his face :

“ Almighty Being, whose avenging arm  
Protects religion, and her sons from harm,  
How long shall justice sleep, or tyrants live,  
The perjured flourish, and oppression thrive ?  
Let us, O God, Thy gracious mercies tell,  
Thy fiery scourges let the sinner feel.  
Dispel death's horrid gloom, assist the brave,  
And crush the tyrant, whom Thy fury gave.  
Send Thy destroying angel from above,  
Descend in flames, and let Thy thunders move.  
Descend, and quell the sacrilegious host,  
Defeat their triumphs, and confound their boast.  
Let ruin seize, Great Sovereign Lord of all !  
Kings, chiefs, and armies in one common fall :  
As gathering storms the leaves of Autumn bear  
O'er hills and valleys, through the fields of air.  
The League shall praise Thy name with holy tongue,  
And o'er the fallen elevate the song.”

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had just been admitted to the priesthood, when he committed this paricide.

The fiction so prominent in the fifth canto, and which will, perhaps, appear too bold to some readers, is not new. The malice of the Leaguers, and the fanaticism of the monks of that period, caused the people to regard as a fact what is here only an invention of the poet.

Discord, attentive, heard his hideous cries,  
And swift to Pluto's dreary regions flies.  
From those dark realms the worst of tyrants came,  
Fanatic Demon is his horrid name :  
Religion's son, but rebel in her cause,  
He tears her bosom, and disdains her laws.  
'Twas he that guided Ammon's frantic race,  
Where silver Arnon<sup>1</sup> winds his liquid maze—  
When weeping mothers, with mad zeal possess'd,  
Slew their fond infants clinging to the breast.  
Through him rash Jephtha vow'd ; the fiend imbrued  
The father's dagger in the daughter's blood.  
By him the impious Chalchas was inspired,  
And tender Iphigenia's death required.  
Thy forests, France, the cruel power approved ;  
There smoked the incense which Teutates<sup>2</sup> loved.  
Thy shades have seen the human victims bleed,  
While hoary Druids authorized the deed.  
From Rome's proud capitol he gave the word,  
When Christians shudder'd at the pagan sword :  
When Rome submitted to the Son of God,  
High o'er the Church he waved his iron rod.  
Christians, once doom'd to feel the torturing flame,  
Were deaf to mercy, and unmoved by shame.  
On Thames's banks the seeds of faction<sup>3</sup> grew,  
Whose bloody arm the feeble monarch slew.  
The same fierce genius fans the annual fire

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<sup>1</sup> The countries of the Ammonites, who cast their children into the flames, at the sound of drums and trumpets, in honor of the divinity whom they worshipped under the name of Moloch.

<sup>2</sup> Teutates was one of the gods of the Gauls. It is not certain that he was identical with Mercury ; but it is unquestionable that human sacrifices were made to him.

<sup>3</sup> The enthusiasts, who were called Independents, were those who took the principal part in the death of Charles I, king of England.

At Lisbon, or Madrid, when Jews expire ;  
Unwilling to desert the cause of heaven,  
Or quit the faith their ancestors have given.

Like some high priest, his part the demon play'd,  
In the pure vest of innocence array'd.  
Now, from the wardrobe of eternal night,  
For other crimes equipp'd, he sprung to light.  
Deceit, forever plausible and fair,  
Dress'd him like Guise in person, height, and air.  
The haughty Guise, whose artifice alone  
Enchain'd the listless monarch on his throne,  
Whose power still working, like some fatal star,  
Foreboded ruin, and inspired to war.  
The dreaded helmet glitter'd on his head ;  
The sword, prepared for every murderous deed,  
Flamed in his hand ; and many a wound could tell  
How once at Blois the factious hero fell.  
For vengeance calling loud, the crimson tide  
Fast flow'd in copious streams adown his side.  
Clad in this mournful garb, when night had shed  
Her peaceful slumbers over Clement's head,  
In that still hour, when horrid spectres meet,  
He sought the zealot in his calm retreat.  
Cabal, and Superstition, nurse of sin,  
Unbarr'd the doors, and let the chieftain in.

“Thy prayers,” he cried, “the powers of heaven receive,  
But more than tears, or prayers, should Clement give.  
The Leaguer's God will other offerings claim,  
More fit, more worthy of, his holy name.  
Far other incense must adorn his shrine ;  
Offerings more pure, and worship more divine.  
Had Judith only wept with plaintive sighs,

A female's grief, and unavailing cries—  
Had life been dearer than her country's call,  
Judith had seen Bethulia's levell'd wall.  
These exploits copy, these oblations bring—  
Derive thy currents from that sacred spring.  
I see thee blush ; go, fly at my command,  
Let royal blood now consecrate thy hand.  
Set wretched Paris from her tyrant free,  
Revenging Rome, the universe, and me.  
Go, murder Valois, as he murder'd Guise,  
Nor deem it faulty in religion's eyes.  
Who guards the Church, and vindicates her laws,  
Is bravely acting in fair virtue's cause.  
When heaven commands, then every deed is good ;  
Attend her accents, and prepare for blood.  
Thrice happy couldst thou join the tyrant's death  
To Bourbon's fall, and gain a nobler wreath !  
Oh, could thy citizens !—but fate denies  
Thy hand the honors of that happy prize.  
Yet, should thy fame with rays inferior shine,  
Scorn not the gift, but finish heaven's design."

Thus spoke the phantom, and unsheathed the blade,  
By Hatred once in Stygian waters laid.  
To Clement's hand he gave the fatal steel,  
Then swiftly fled, and downward sunk to hell.  
The young recluse, too easily deceived,  
Himself the Almighty's delegate believed ;  
Embraced the gift with reverential love,  
And begg'd assistance from the powers above.  
The fiend no superstitious influence spared,  
But all his soul for parricide prepared.  
How apt is error to mislead mankind !  
And reason's piercing eye, how often blind !



The raging Clement, happy, and at ease,  
 Happy as those whom truth and virtue please ;  
 With downcast looks, and virtue's clouded brow,  
 To heaven address'd the sacrilegious vow.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A narrative of the martyrdom of brother Jacques Clement was publicly circulated, wherein it was asserted that an angel had appeared to him, and, displaying a naked sword, had ordered him to kill the tyrant. The public suspected that some of the associates of Jacques Clement, taking advantage of the weakness of the wretched man, had themselves spoken to him during the night, and easily troubled his head, already turned by fasting and superstition. However this may have been, Clement prepared himself for the parricide as a good Christian would have done for martyrdom, by mortifications and by prayer. It cannot be doubted that he considered his crime a righteous act ; and he is, therefore, represented here as a weak-minded man, rather than as a wicked man, governed by his evil propensities.

Jacques Clement left Paris near the close of July, 1589, and was taken to Saint-Cloud by la Guesle, the attorney-general. The latter, suspecting some evil design on the part of the monk, sent a person during the night to the place where he had retired, in order to ascertain how he was employed. The monk was found in a deep sleep : his breviary was beside him, opened at the chapter on the murder of Holophernes by Judith, which was nearly obliterated by finger-marks. Care has been taken in the poem to present the example of Judith to Jacques Clement, in imitation of the preachers of the League, who made use of the Holy Scriptures to justify parricide.

We will cite here a passage from a book written by a Dominican, and printed at Troyes, by M. Moreau, a short time after the death of Henry III :

“ So that God, hearing the prayer of one of his servants, named Jacques Clement, one night, as he was in bed, sent to him an angel in a vision, who with a bright light presented himself to this religious, and showing to him a naked sword, uttered these words : ‘ Brother Jacques, I am a messenger of the Almighty God, who comes to declare that by thee the tyrant of France must be put to death. Think of thyself, and prepare thyself, as a crown of martyrdom is also prepared for thee.’

“ This said, the vision disappeared, and left him to ponder upon these veritable words. The morning having come, brother Jacques recalled the apparition of the previous night ; and, doubtful as to what he should do, addressed himself to one of his religious friends, a man of learning, and well versed in the Holy Scriptures, to whom he declared frankly his vision, asking him, moreover, if it could be a thing agreeable to God to kill a king who has neither faith nor religion, and who seeks only to oppress his poor subjects, thirsting for innocent blood, and steeped, as much as possible, in vices. To which the worthy man replied, that, truly, we were

On as he march'd, his penitential garb  
Conceal'd from view the parricidal barb.  
The fairest flowers each conscious friend bestow'd,  
And balmy odors to perfume the road.  
These guides, in counsel or in praises, join'd  
To add new fervor to his zealous mind.  
The holy calendar received his name,  
Equal to saints in virtue and in fame.  
Now hail'd as patron, now invoked aloud,  
And fed with incense by the kneeling crowd.  
Transports less warm, less moving raptures fired  
The Christian heroes, and their souls inspired,  
When pious brethren were consign'd to death,  
Firm and intrepid to their latest breath.  
They kiss'd each footstep, thought each torture gain,  
And wish'd to feel each agonizing pain.  
Fanatics thus religion's ensigns bear,  
Like worthies triumph, and like saints appear.  
The same desire the good and impious draws;  
Unnumber'd martyrs fall in error's cause.

Mayne's piercing eyes beheld the future blow,  
And more was known than what he seem'd to know.  
Intending wisely, when the blood was spilt,  
To reap the profits, but avoid the guilt.  
Sedition's sons were left to guide the whole,  
And steel with rage the impious zealot's soul.  
To Paris' gates they lead the traitor on;  
While the Sixteen with fond impatience run

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forbidden by God to kill; but, inasmuch as the king was a madman, separated from the Church, who exercised the most execrable tyranny, and who was determined to be a perpetual scourge to France, he thought that the person who would put him to death, as did Judith formerly Holophernes, would do a thing very holy and very commendable."—K.

To arts infernal, and devoutly pray,  
That heaven her secret counsels would display.  
This science once distinguish'd Catherine's<sup>1</sup> reign,  
Though always criminal, and often vain.  
The servile people, that forever love  
Each courtly vice, and what the great approve,  
Fond of whate'er is marvellous or new,  
The same impieties with zeal pursue.

When night's still shades conceal the bands impure,  
Silence conducts them to a vault obscure.  
By the pale torch, which faintly pierced the gloom,  
They raise an altar on the mouldering tomb.  
There both the royal images appear,  
Alike the objects of their rage and fear.  
There to Almighty Power their vows are paid,  
And hellish demons summon'd to their aid.  
High on their walls a hundred lances stood,  
Mysterious, awful terrors! plunged in blood.  
Their priest was one of that unhappy race  
Proscribed on earth, and sentenced to disgrace.  
Slaves long inured to superstition's lore,  
Whose crimes and sorrows spread from shore to shore.  
The Leaguers next the sacrifice begin  
With horrid cries, and bacchanalian din :  
Now bathe their arms within the crimson tide ;  
Now on the altar strike at Valois' side.  
Now with more rage, the terror to complete,

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<sup>1</sup> Catherine de Medici had made magic so fashionable in France, that a priest named Sécheltes, who was burned to death under the reign of Henry III for sorcery, accused twelve hundred persons of this pretended crime. Ignorance and stupidity were so prevalent in these times, that little was spoken of except exorcisms, and condemnations to the stake. Men were even found sufficiently foolish to believe in magicians, and there were judges superstitious enough to punish them as such.

See Henry's image trod beneath their feet.  
Death, as they thought, would aid the impious blow,  
And send the heroes to the shades below.

The Hebrew<sup>2</sup> tried by blasphemy to move  
The depths beneath, and all the powers above.  
Invoked the spirits that in ether dwell,  
Swift lightnings, thunders, and the flames of hell.  
Endor's famed priestess erst such offerings made,  
And raised by dire enchantments Samuel's shade.  
Thus in Sâmaria once 'gainst Judah hung  
The lying accent on the prophet's tongue;  
And thus inflexibly Ateius<sup>3</sup> rose,  
The high designs of Crassus to oppose.

The League's mad ruler waited to receive  
To charms and spells what answer heaven would give.  
Convinced that vows thus offer'd wing their way  
To the pure regions of eternal day.  
Heaven heard the magic sounds which only drew  
From thence the vengeance to their errors due.  
From them were stopped the laws which nature gave,  
And plaintive murmurs fill'd the silent cave.

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<sup>1</sup> Several of the Leaguer priests made waxen images of Henry III and the King of Navarre, which they placed upon the altar, and, after piercing them during mass for forty consecutive days, on the fortieth day pierced them to the heart.

<sup>2</sup> The Jews were ordinarily employed for operations in magic. This ancient superstition comes from the secrets of the Cabala, of which the Jews were said to be the sole depositaries. Catherine de Medici, the Marshal d'Anere, and many others, made use of Jews at these pretended sorceries.

<sup>3</sup> Ateius, a tribune of the people, not being able to prevent Crassus from marching against the Parthians, carried a brazier filled with burning coals to the gate of the city, by which Crassus was to go out, and casting into it certain herbs, cursed the expedition of Crassus, invoking, at the same time, the infernal divinities.

Successive lightnings in the depth of night  
Flash'd all around, and gleam'd with horrid light.  
Great Henry shone amid the lambent flames,  
Encircled round with glory's golden beams.  
High on the car of triumph as he rode,  
Grace on his brow the laurel wreath bestow'd,  
The royal sceptre glitter'd in his hand,  
Emblem of power, and ensign of command.  
Loud rolling thunders gave the fatal sign,  
And opening earth received the flaming shrine,  
The priest and Leaguers shudder'd at the sight,  
And veil'd their crimes beneath the shades of night.  
The rolling thunders, and the fiery blaze,  
Declared that God had number'd Valois' days.  
Grim Death rejoiced ; and, such the Almighty's will,  
Crimes were allow'd his sentence to fulfil.

Now Clement to the royal tent drew near,  
And begg'd admission, undismay'd by fear ;  
For heaven, he said, had sent him to bestow  
Reviving honors on the monarch's brow ;  
And secrets to unfold, which might appear  
Worthy reception from his sovereign's ear.  
All mark his looks, and many a question ask ;  
Lest his desire some bad design should mask.  
He, undisturb'd, with calm and simple air,  
Returns them answers plausible and fair ;  
Each accent seems from innocence to spring,  
The guards attend, and lead him to their king.

Calm as before, he bent the suppliant knee,  
Unruffled and unawed by majesty :  
Mark'd where to strike, and thus, by falsehood's aid,  
With treacherous lies his feign'd addresses paid.



"Pardon, dread sovereign, him who, trembling, brings  
 Submissive praises to the king of kings.  
 Oh, let me thank kind Heaven, whose gracious aid  
 Has shower'd down blessings on thy sacred head.  
 Potier<sup>1</sup> the good, and Villeroi the sage,  
 Have faithful proved in this rebellious age;  
 Harlay<sup>2</sup> the great, whose brave, intrepid zeal  
 Was ever active in the public weal,  
 Immured in prison, still thy cause defends,  
 Confounds the League and animates thy friends.

"That mighty Being, whose all-piercing eyes  
 Defeat the counsels of the great and wise:  
 Whose will no human knowledge can withstand,  
 Whose works are finish'd by the weakest hand:  
 To Harlay guided thy devoted slave,  
 That loyal subject ever good, and brave.  
 His sage advice, and sentiments refined  
 Diffused a radiance o'er my clouded mind.  
 To bring these lines with eagerness I flew,  
 By Harlay counsel'd, and to Valois true."

The king received the letters with surprise,  
 And tears of holy rapture fill'd his eyes.  
 "Oh, when," he cried, "shall Valois' hand supply

<sup>1</sup> Potier, president of the parliament already spoken of.

Villeroi, who had been secretary of state under Henry III, and who had joined the party of the League, on account of an insult which he had received, in the presence of the king, from the Duke d'Epernon.

<sup>2</sup> Achille de Harlay, who was then confined in the Bastile by Bussi-le-Clerc. Jacques Clement presented to the king a letter on the part of this magistrate. It is not known whether this letter was counterfeit or not; this is astonishing in a fact of this importance, and would make me believe that the letter was genuine, and that President Harlay had been deceived in sending it; otherwise, this treachery would have been loudly sounded against the League.



Rewards proportion'd to thy loyalty?"  
Thus spoke the monarch with affection warm,  
Love undissembled, and extended arm.  
Each motion well the monstrous traitor eyed,  
And fiercely plunged the dagger in his side.  
Soon as the crimson stream was seen to flow,  
A thousand hands revenged the fatal blow.  
The zealot wish'd not for a happier time,  
But knelt unmoved, and triumph'd in his crime.  
Through opening skies he saw the heavenly dome,  
And endless glories in the world to come ;  
Claim'd the bright wreath of martyrdom from God,  
And falling, bless'd the hand that shed his blood.  
Oh, dread illusion, terrible and blind,  
Worthy the hate and pity of mankind.  
Infectious preachers more deserved the blame,  
From whom the madness and the poison came.

The hour arrived when Valois' darken'd sight  
Faintly beheld the parting, glimmering light.  
Surrounding slaves with many a falling tear  
Express'd their griefs, dissembled or sincere.  
For some there were, whose sorrows soon expired,  
With pleasing hopes of future greatness fired.  
Others, whose safety with the king was fled,  
Themselves lamented, not the royal dead.  
Amid the various sounds of plaintive cries  
Tears unaffected flow'd from Henry's eyes.  
Thy foe, great Bourbon, fell ; but souls like thine  
In such dread moments every thought resign,  
Save those which friendship, and compassion claim :  
Self-love destroys not the celestial flame.  
The generous chief forgot his own renown,  
Though to himself devolved the regal crown.

To raise his eyes the dying monarch strove,  
And clasp'd his hand with tenderness and love.

“Bourbon,” he cried, “thy generous tears refrain,  
Let others weep, whose conduct I disdain.  
Fly thou to vengeance, spread the dire alarm,  
Go reign, and triumph with victorious arm.  
I leave thee struggling on the stormy coast,  
Where shipwreck'd Valois was forever lost.  
My throne awaits thee; thine, now, let it be,  
Its sole protection was derived from thee.  
Eternal thunders threaten Gallia's kings;  
Then fear the power from whom the glory springs.  
By thee, from impious tenets undeceived,  
Be all the honors of his shrine revived.  
Farewell, brave prince, and reign by all adored,  
Guarded by heaven from each assassin's sword.  
You know the League, with us begins the blow,  
Nor stays its fury, but would end with you.  
In future days, perchance, some barbarous hand,  
Obedient slave to faction's dread command,  
Some arm—but oh! ye guardian angels, spare  
Virtues so pure, so exquisite, and rare.  
Permit”——no more he said; departing breath  
Consign'd the monarch to the arms of death.<sup>1</sup>

Now is all Paris fill'd with joyful cries,  
And odious songs of triumph rend the skies.

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<sup>1</sup> Henry III died of his wound on the third of August, at two o'clock in the morning, at Saint-Cloud; but not, as some historians have written, in the same house in which he had, with his brother, resolved on the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, for this house was not built at that time.

The fanes are open'd wide at Valois' death,  
And every Leaguer wears the flowery wreath.  
All labor ends, while faction, blithe and gay,  
To mirth and feasting consecrates the day.  
Bourbon appear'd the object of their sport,  
And glorious valor seem'd his sole support.  
Say, could he rise, and e'er resist again,  
The strengthen'd League, the angry Church, and Spain :  
The Roman thunders with such fury hurl'd,  
And the bright treasures of the western world !

Some warlike few, who little understood  
A subject's duty, or the public good,  
Affecting scruples foolish, and refined,  
To fight for Calvin's votary had declined.  
Redoubled ardor in the royal cause  
The rest inflamed, and ruled by other laws.  
These generous soldiers, well approved in war,  
Who long had rode on triumph's radiant car,  
To Bourbon give unsettled Gallia's throne,  
And all proclaim him worthy of the crown.  
Those valiant knights, the Givrys and d'Aumouts,  
The Montmorencys, Saneys, and Crillons,  
Swear to remain inviolable friends,  
And guard his person to earth's utmost ends  
True to their laws, and faithful to their God,  
They boldly march where honor points the road.

"From you, my friends," cried Bourbon, "is derived  
That lot which kindred heroes have received.  
No peers have authorized our high command,  
No holy oil, or consecrating hand.  
All due allegiance, in the days of yore,

Your brave forefathers on their buckler swore.  
To victory's laurell'd field your hands confined,  
From thence send forth the monarchs of mankind."

Thus spoke the chief, and, marching first, prepared  
By martial deeds to merit his reward.

THE HENRIADE.

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CANTO VI.

## THE ARGUMENT.

After the death of Henry III the Leaguers assemble in Paris, to elect a king. In the midst of their debates, Henry IV storms the city. The assembly is dismissed. The members that composed it repair to the ramparts. Description of the ensuing battle.



## CANTO THE SIXTH.<sup>1</sup>

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IN France an ancient custom we retain :  
When Death's rude stroke has closed a house's reign,  
When Destiny cuts short the smooth descent,  
And all the royal pedigree is spent,  
The people, to their former rights restored,  
May change the laws, or choose their future lord.  
The States in council represent the whole,  
Elect the king, and limit his control ;  
Thus our renown'd forefathers did ordain,  
That Capet should succeed to Charlemagne.

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<sup>1</sup> The sixth and seventh cantos are those in which Voltaire has made the greatest changes. That which was the sixth in the first edition of 1723, is the seventh in the London quarto edition, and those subsequent to it; and the commencement of this canto is drawn from the ninth canto of the edition of 1723. As, in an epic poem, more regard is paid to the rules of design than to chronology, the death of Henry III is followed immediately by the States of Paris, which were not assembled until four years after.

According to history, Henry the Great besieged Paris some years after the battle of Ivry, in the month of April, 1590. The Duke de Parma compelled him to raise the siege in the month of September. The League, a long time afterwards, in 1593, assembled the States to elect a king in the stead of Cardinal de Bourbon, whom it had recognized under the name of Charles X, and who had now been dead two years and a half; and in July of the same year, 1593, the king made his abjuration in Saint Denis, but did not enter Paris until the month of March, 1594.

Of all these events, the arrival of the Duke de Parma, and the pretended reign of Charles X, cardinal de Bourbon, have been suppressed. It is easy to perceive that to bring the Duke de Parma upon the scene would have been to diminish the glory of Henry IV, the hero of the poem, and to con-

The League, with vain presumption, arrogates  
 This right, and hastens to convene the States.  
 They thought the murder of the king bestow'd  
 That power, perhaps, on those who shed his blood;  
 Thought that the semblance of a throne would shroud  
 Their dark designs, and captivate the crowd—  
 Would help their jarring counsels to unite,  
 And give their foul pretence an air of right;  
 That from what source soe'er his claim may spring,

flict directly with the aim of the work, which would be an unpardonable fault.

In regard to Cardinal de Bourbon, it was not worth while to mar the unity, so essential in every epic, for the sake of a mock king like this cardinal, who would have been as useless in the poem as he was to the party of the League. In a word, nothing is said about the Duke de Parma, because he was too great, and of the Cardinal de Bourbon, because he was too little. It was necessary to place the States of Paris before the siege, because if they had been put in their order, the same opportunities would not have been found for displaying the virtues of the hero. Besides, the assembling of the States of Paris is not one of those events that cannot be moved from their chronological point. Poetry permits the transposition of all facts that are not separated from one another by a great number of years, and which have no necessary connection with each other. For example, I might, without exposing myself to just criticism, represent Henry IV in love with Gabrielle d'Estrées during the life of Henry III, because the life and death of Henry III had nothing in common with the passion of Henry IV for Gabrielle d'Estrées. The States of the League bear as little relation to the siege of Paris; they are two events absolutely independent of each other. These States produced no effect; no resolution was adopted by them; they contributed in no manner to the party; chance might have assembled them before the siege as well as after it; and they are better placed before the siege in the poem. Besides, it must not be thought that an epic poem is a history: this rule cannot be too strongly impressed upon those who are not familiar with it.

Away, ye stupid poets, who rehearse  
 In faultless measure your didactic verse,  
 Who sing a hero's brilliant deeds in rhyme,  
 Exactly in their order as to time;  
 Who dare not overlook the slightest fact:  
 To capture Lille, lo! Dôle must first be sack'd;  
 And, that you be precise as Mézeray,  
 You must raze, too, the ramparts of Courtray.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> BOILEAU, *Art. Poet.*, Canto II.

Just or unjust, a king is still a king,  
And worthy or unworthy of the sway,  
A Frenchman must have something to obey.

Swift to the Louvre with imperious air,  
And fierce demeanor, the proud chiefs repair ;  
Thither whom Spain ambassador had sent,  
And Rome, with many a priestly bigot, went,  
To speed the election with tumultuous haste—  
An insult on the kings of ages past ;  
And in the splendor of their trains, expense  
Was seen, the child of public indigence.  
No princely potentate, or high-born peer,  
Sprung from our old nobility, was there ;  
Their grandeur now a shadowy form alone,  
Though lawgivers by birth, and kinsmen of the throne.  
No sage asserters of the public claim,  
Strenuous and hardy, from the commons came ;  
No lilies, as of old, the court array'd,  
But Rome's high legate all his pomp display'd.  
There, sumptuous o'er the throne, for Mayne prepared,  
• A canopy of royal state was reared,  
And on the front, with rich embroidery graced,  
Oh, dire indignity ! these lines were traced :  
"Kings of the earth, and judges of mankind,  
Who, deaf to mercy, by no laws confined,  
Lay nature waste beneath your fierce domain,  
Let Valois' fate instruct you how to reign."

Forthwith contentious rage with jarring sound,  
And clamorous strife discordant echo round.  
Slave to the smiles of Rome, obsequious here,  
A venal flatterer soothes the legate's ear ;  
'Tis time, he cries, the lily should bow down

Her head, obedient to the triple crown,  
Time that the Church should lift her chastening hand,<sup>1</sup>  
And from her high tribunal scourge the land.  
Cruel tribunal! scene of monkish power,  
Which even the realms that suffer it abhor;  
Whose fiery priests by bigotry prepared,  
Torture and death without remorse award,  
Disgraceful to the sacred cause they guard.  
As if mankind were, as of old, possess'd  
With pagan blindness, when the lying priest,  
To appease the wrath of heaven with vengeance fired,  
The sacrifice of human blood required.

Some for Iberian gold betray the State,  
And sell it to the Spaniard whom they hate.  
But mightier than the rest, their power was shown,  
Who destined Mayne already to the throne.  
The splendor of a crown was wanting yet,  
To make the fulness of his fame complete;  
To that bright goal his daring wish he sends,  
Nor heeds the danger that on kings attends.

Then Potier<sup>2</sup> rose; plain, nervous, and untaught  
His eloquence, the language of his thought.  
No blemish of the times had touch'd the sage,  
Revered for virtue in a vicious age;  
Oft had he check'd, with courage uncontroll'd,  
The tide of faction headlong as it roll'd;  
Asserted hardily the laws he loved,

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<sup>1</sup> The Inquisition which the Dukes de Guise wished to establish in France.

<sup>2</sup> Potier de Blaneménil, president of the parliament, already spoken of in the fourth and fifth cantos. He asked, publicly, permission of the Duke de Mayenne to retire to Henry IV, saying: "I will regard you, all my life, as my benefactor, but I cannot regard you as my master."

Nor ever feared reproof, or was reproved.  
He raised his voice; struck silent at the sound,  
The crowd was hush'd, and listening, gather'd round.  
So when at sea the winds have ceased to roar,  
And the loud sailor's cries are heard no more,  
No sound survives, but of the dashing prow,  
That cleaves with prosperous course the obedient wave  
below.

Such Potier seem'd; no rude disturbance broke  
The attentive calm, while freely thus he spoke:

“Mayne, I perceive then, has the general voice,  
And though I praise not, can excuse your choice;  
His virtues I esteem not less than you,  
And, were I free to choose, might choose him too.  
But if the laws, ambitious, he pervert,  
His claim of empire cancels his desert.”

Thus far the sage; when lo! that instant Mayne  
Himself appeared, with all a monarch's train.

“Prince!” he pursued, and spoke it boldly forth,  
“I dare oppose you, for I know your worth;  
Dare step between your merit and the throne,  
Warm in the cause of France, and in our own.  
Vain your election were, your right unsound,  
While yet in France a Bourbon may be found;  
Heaven in its wisdom placed you near the throne,  
That you might guard, but not usurp the crown;  
His ashes sprinkled with a monarch's gore,  
The shade of injured Guise can ask no more;  
Point not your vengeance then at Henry's head,  
Nor charge him with the blood he never shed.  
Heaven's influence on you both too largely flows,



And 'tis your rival virtue makes you foes.  
But hark! the clamor of the common herd  
Ascends the skies, and heretic's the word ;  
And see the priesthood ranged in dark array,  
To deeds of blood insatiate urge their way!  
Barbarians, hold,—what custom yet unknown,  
What law, or rather frenzy of your own,  
Can cancel your allegiance to the throne?  
Comes he, this Henry, savage and unjust,  
To o'erthrow your shrines, and mix them with the dust?  
He? To those shrines in search of truth he flies,  
And loves the sacred laws yourselves despise ;  
Virtue alone, whatever form she wears,  
Whatever sect she graces, he reveres ;  
Nor like yourselves, weak, arrogant, and blind,  
Dares do the work of God, and judge mankind :  
More righteous and more Christian far than you,  
He comes to rule, but to forgive you, too.  
And shall you judge your master, and shall he,  
The friend of freedom, not himself be free ?  
Not such, alas ! nor sullied with your crimes,  
Were the true Christian race of elder times ;  
They, though all heathen errors they abhorr'd,  
Served without murmuring their heathen lord,—  
The doom of death without a groan obey'd,  
And bless'd the cruel hand by which they bled :  
Such are the Christians whom true faith assures ;  
They died to serve their kings, you murder yours—  
And God, whom you describe forever prone  
To wrath, if he delights to shower it down  
On guilty heads, shall aim it at your own."

He closed his bold harangue, confusion scared  
Their conscious souls, none answer'd him, or dared ;



In vain they would have shaken from their hearts  
The dread which truth to guiltiness imparts ;  
With fear and rage their troubled thoughts were toss'd,  
When suddenly a shout from all their host  
Was heard, "To arms ! to arms ! or we are lost !"

Dark clouds of dust in floating volumes rise  
Wide o'er the champaign, and obscure the skies !  
The clarion and the drum with horrid sound,  
Dread harbingers of slaughter, echo round :  
So from his gloomy chambers in the north,  
When the fierce spirit of the storm breaks forth,  
His dusky pinions shroud the noon-day light,  
And thunder and sharp winds attend his dreary flight.

'Twas Henry's host came shouting from afar,  
Disdaining ease, and eager for the war ;  
O'er the wide plain they stretch'd their bright array,  
And to the ramparts urged their furious way.

These hours the chief vouchsafed not to consume  
In empty rites perform'd at Valois' tomb—  
Unprofitable tribute ! fondly paid  
By the proud living to the unconscious dead ;  
No lofty dome, or monumental pile,  
On the waste shore he raised with fruitless toil ;  
Vain arts ! to rescue the departed great  
From the rough tooth of time, and rage of fate :  
A nobler meed on Valois' shade below,  
And worthier gifts he hasten'd to bestow ;  
To avenge his murder, make rebellion cease,  
And rule the subjugated land in peace.

The din of battle, gathering at their gates,

Dissolved their council, and dispersed the States.  
Swift from the walls, to view the advancing host,  
The general flew, the soldier to his post ;  
With shouts the approaching hero they incense,  
And all is ripe for onset and defence.

Though pleasure, now, and peace securely reign  
In all her courts, not such was Paris then,  
But girt with massy walls, and unexposed,  
An hundred forts the narrower town inclosed ;  
The suburbs, now defenceless and unbarr'd,  
The gentle hand of peace their only guard,  
Adorn'd with all the pomp that wealth supplies,  
Proud spires and palaces that pierce the skies,  
Were then a cluster of rude huts alone,  
With earthen rampart all around them thrown,  
And a deep fosse to part them from the town.  
Eastward the mighty chief the assault began,  
And death with hasty strides came foremost in his van.  
Wing'd with red flames, impetuous from on high,  
And from below the shower'd bullets fly—  
The rattling storm resistless thickens round,  
And tumbles tower and bastion to the ground ;  
Gored and defaced, the gay battalions bleed,  
And on the plain their shatter'd limbs are spread.

In earlier times, unaided and untaught,  
His fate by simpler means the soldier wrought ;  
Strength against strength opposed, the contest tried,  
And on their swords alone the combatants relied ;  
More cruel wars their children learn'd to wage,  
Nor less than lightning satisfied their rage.

Then first was heard the thunder-bearing bomb,<sup>1</sup>  
Imprison'd mischief struggling in its womb.  
Swift on the destined mark the ponderous shell  
Came down, and spread destruction where it fell.

Next, dire improvement on the barbarous trade,  
In hollow vaults the secret mine was laid ;  
In vain the warrior, trusting in his might,  
Speeds his bold march and seeks the promised fight,  
A sudden blast divides the yawning earth,  
And the black vapor kindles into birth,  
Smote by strange thunder sinks the astonish'd host,  
Deep in the dark abyss forever lost.  
These dangers Bourbon unappall'd defies,  
Impatient for the strife, a throne the prize.  
Where'er his hardy bands the hero leads,  
'Tis hell beneath, and tempest o'er their heads—  
His glorious steps undaunted they pursue,  
Fired by his deeds still brightening in their view.

Grave in their midst the intrepid Mornay went,  
Though slow his march, intrepid his intent ;  
Rage he alike disdain'd and slavish dread,  
Nor heard the thunders bursting round his head ;  
War was heaven's scourge on man, he wisely thought,  
Nor loved the task, but took it as his lot ;  
E'en for the wonders of his sword he grieved,  
And loathed it for the glories it achieved.

Now pour'd their legions down the dreadful way,  
Where smear'd with blood the sloping glacis lay ;

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<sup>1</sup> It was in the wars in Flanders, under Philip II, that an ingenious Italian made use of bombs for the first time. Almost all our arts are due to the Italians.

More fierce as more in danger, with the slain  
They choke the fosse, and lift it to the plain ;  
Then borne upon the supple numbers, reach  
The ramparts, and rush headlong to the breach.  
Waving his bloody falchion, Henry led  
The way, and enter'd furious at their head.  
Already fix'd by his victorious hand,  
High on the walls his glittering banners stand.  
Awe-struck the Leaguers seem'd, as they implored  
The conqueror's mercy, and confess'd their lord ;  
But Mayne recalls them to their guilty part,  
And drives the dawning grace from every heart,  
'Till, crowded in close phalanx, they beset  
Their king, whose eye their hardest fear'd to meet.  
Fierce on the battlements, and bathed in blood  
Of thousands slain, the fury Discord stood ;  
There best her horrid mandates they obey,  
And join'd in closer fight, more surely slay.

Sudden the deep-mouth'd engines cease to roar,  
And the loud thunder of the war is o'er.  
At once a universal silence round,  
With awful pause, succeeds the deafening sound ;  
Now through his foes the soldier cleaves his way,  
And on the sword alone depends the day ;  
Alternate the contending leaders boast  
The bloody ramparts won, and yield them lost ;  
Still victory the doubtful balance sway'd,  
And join'd in air the mingling banners play'd,  
'Till oft triumphant, and as oft subdued,  
Fled the pale League, and Henry swift pursued.  
'Tis thus the restless billows wash the shore,  
By turns o'erwhelm it, and by turns restore.

Then most in that tremendous hour was shown  
The might of Bourbon's rival, and his own ;  
'Twas then each hero's warlike soul was proved,  
That in the shock of charging hosts unmoved,  
Amid confusion, horror, and despair,  
Ranged the dread scene, and ruled the doubtful war.

Meanwhile, renown'd for many a martial deed,  
A gallant English band brave Essex led ;  
In Gallia's cause, with wonder, they advance,  
And scarcely can believe they fight for France.  
On the same ramparts where the conquer'd Seine  
Saw, in old time, their great forefathers reign,  
For England's sake, they wage the mortal strife,  
Proud to enhance her fame, and prodigal of life.  
Impetuous Essex first the breach ascends,  
Where fierce d'Aumale the crowded pass defends,  
To fight, like fabled demigods, they came,  
Their age, their ardor, and their force the same ;  
French, English, and Lorrains, in combat close,  
And in one stream the mingled crimson flows.

O thou ! the genius of that fatal day,  
Soul of the strife, destroying angel, say  
Whose was the triumph then ; which hero's host  
Yourself assisted, and heaven favor'd most ?  
Long time the chiefs, with rival glory crown'd,  
Dealt equal slaughter through the legions round ;  
At length, by factious rage, in vain, assail'd  
The righteous cause, and Henry's arms prevail'd ;  
Worn with disastrous toil and long fatigue,  
Exhausted, hopeless, fled the vanquish'd League.  
As on Pyrene's ever-clouded brow,  
When swelling torrents threat the vale below,

Awhile with solid banks and lofty mounds,  
They stay the foaming deluge in its bounds ;  
But soon, the barrier broke, the rushing tide  
Roars, unresisted, down the mountain's side,  
Uproots the forest oaks, and bears away  
Flocks, folds, and herds, an undistinguish'd prey ;  
So from the smoking walls, with matchless force,  
Victorious Bourbon urged his rapid course.  
Such havoc, where the royal warrior pass'd,  
Had soon the boastful enemy laid waste.  
The Sixteen, awed, fly fast the vengeful arm,  
Bewilder'd, lost, and scatter'd in alarm.  
At length, the friendly gates, by Mayne's command,  
Flung wide, received the desolated band.  
The victor host around the suburbs fly  
Incensed, and hurl the blazing torch on high,  
Their temperate valor kindles into rage,  
And spoil and plunder are the war they wage.  
Henry perceived it not ; with eager flight  
He chased the foe, dispersed before his fight ;  
Spurr'd by his courage, with success elate,  
And ardent joy, he reach'd the hostile gate,  
Thence on his scatter'd power aloud he calls,  
“ Haste, fly, my friends, and scale the haughty walls.”

When sudden, in a rolling cloud enshrined,  
A beauteous form came floating on the wind ;  
With gracious mien, and awful to the view,  
Towards Henry the descending vision flew ;  
His brow was with immortal splendor graced,  
And horror, mix'd with love, his radiant eyes express'd.  
“ Hold, hapless conqueror of your native land !”  
The phantom cried, “ and stay your vengeful hand ;  
This fair dominion you with war deface,



Is yours of old, the birthright of your race ;  
These lives you seek are vassals of your throne,  
This wealth you give to plunder, is your own ;  
Spare your own heritage, nor seek to reign  
A solitary monarch o'er the slain."

Amazed, the soldier heard the solemn sound,  
And dropp'd his spoils, and prostrate kiss'd the ground.

Then Henry, rage still boiling in his breast,  
Like seas, hoarse-murmuring, while they sink to rest :

"Say, bright inhabitant of heaven, what means  
Thy hallow'd form amid these horrid scenes?"

Mild as the breeze, at summer's evening tide  
Serene, the visionary shape replied :

"Behold the sainted king, whom France adores,  
Protector of the Bourbon race, and yours—  
That Louis, who, like you, once urged the fight,  
Whose shrines you heed not, and whose faith you slight ;  
Know, when the destined days their course have run,  
Heaven shall itself conduct you to the throne ;  
Thine is the victory, but that great reward  
Is for thy mercy, not thy might, prepared."

He spoke, the listening chief with rapture hears,  
And down his cheek fast flow the joyful tears ;  
Peace soothed his tranquil heart, he dropp'd his sword,  
And on his knees devout the shade adored.  
Then thrice around his neck his arms he flung,  
And thrice deceived, on vain embraces hung ;  
Light as an empty dream at break of day,  
Or as a blast of wind, he rush'd away.

Meanwhile, in haste to guard the invested town,  
The swarming multitude the ramparts crown ;  
Thick from above a fiery flood they pour,

And at the monarch aim the fatal shower ;  
But heaven's bright influence, round his temples shed,  
Diverts the storm, and guards his sacred head ;  
'Twas then he saw, protected as he stood,  
What thanks to his paternal saint he owed ;  
Towards Paris his sad eye in sorrow thrown,  
" Ye French !" he cried, " and thou, ill-fated town,  
Ye citizens, a blind, deluded herd,  
How long will you withstand your lawful lord !"  
Nor more ; but as the star that brings the day,  
At eve declining in his western way,  
More mildly shoots his horizontal fires,  
And seems an ampler globe as he retires,  
Such from the walls the parting hero turn'd,  
While all his kindred saint within his bosom burn'd.  
Vincennes he sought, where Louis whilom spoke  
His righteous laws beneath an aged oak.  
Vincennes,<sup>1</sup> alas ! no more a calm retreat ;  
How art thou changed, thou once delightful seat !  
Thy rural charms, thy peaceful smiles are fled,  
And blank despair possesses thee instead.  
'Tis there the great, their hapless labors done,  
And all the short-lived race of glory run,  
The fickle changes of their various lot  
Conclude, and die neglected and forgot.

Now Night o'er heaven pursued her dusty way,  
And hid in shades the horrors of the day.

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<sup>1</sup> It is well known how many prisoners of state Cardinals de Richelieu and Mazarin shut up at Vincennes. While *The Henriade* was in progress, the Secretary of State, Le Blanc, was a prisoner in this castle ; and in it he, afterwards, confined his own enemies.

THE HENRIADE.

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CANTO VII.

## THE ARGUMENT.

Henry IV is transported in a vision by St. Louis to heaven, and the infernal regions. He arrives at the palace of the Destinies ; where he has an opportunity of seeing his posterity, and the great men hereafter to be produced in France.

## CANTO THE SEVENTH.<sup>1</sup>

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THE great, the boundless clemency of God,  
To soothe the ills of life's perplexing road,  
Sweet Sleep and Hope, two friendly beings gave,  
Which earth's dark, gloomy confines never leave.  
When man, fatigued by labors of the day,  
Has toil'd his spirits and his strength away,  
That, nature's friend, restores her powers again,  
And brings the blest forgetfulness of pain.  
This, oft deceitful, but forever kind,  
Diffuses warmth and transport through the mind ;  
From her the few, whom heaven approves, may learn  
The pleasing issue of each high concern.  
Pure as her author in the realms above,  
To them she brings the tidings of his love.

Immortal Louis bid the faithful pair  
Expand their downy wings, and soften Henry's care.  
Still Sleep repairs to Vincennes' shady ground ;  
The winds subside, and silence reigns around.

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<sup>1</sup> The judicious reader will perceive that it has been absolutely necessary to put the fictitious portion of this seventh canto in the form of a dream ; for, under any other form, it would have been intolerable. A supposition is therefore made (and the Christian religion permits it), that God, who gives us all our ideas, shows, in a dream, to Henry IV the events which he is preparing for France, and opens to him the secrets of his providence under allegorical emblems, which will be explained more at length.

Hope's blooming offspring, happy Dreams, succeed,  
And give the pleasing, though ideal meed.  
The verdant olive, and the laurel bough,  
Entwined with poppies, grace the hero's brow.

On Bourbon's temples Louis placed the crown,  
Whose radiant honors once adorn'd his own.  
"Go, reign," he cried, "and triumph o'er thy foes;  
No other hope the race of Louis knows.  
Yet think diviner presents to receive,  
Far more, my son, than royalty I give.  
What boots renown in arms, should heaven withhold  
Her light, more precious than the purest gold?  
These worldly honors are a barren good;  
Rewards uncertain on the brave bestow'd:  
A transient greatness, and a fading wreath,  
Blasted by troubles, and destroy'd by death.  
Empire more durable, for thee design'd,  
I come to show thee, and inform thy mind.  
Attend my steps through paths thou ne'er hast trod,  
And fly to meet the bosom of thy God."

Thus spoke the saint; they mount the car of light,  
And swiftly traverse the ethereal height.  
Thus midnight lightnings flash, while thunders roll,  
And cleave the ambient air from pole to pole.  
Thus rose Elijah on the fiery clouds;  
The radiant ether with effulgence glowed:  
To purer worlds, array'd in glories bright,  
The prophet fled, and vanish'd from the sight.

Amid those orbs, which move by certain laws,  
Known to each sage whom love of science draws,  
The sun revolving round his axle turns,



Shines undiminish'd, and forever burns.  
Thence spring those golden torrents, which bestow  
All vital warmth and vigor as they flow.  
Thence the thrice welcome day and year proceed ;  
Through various worlds their genial influence spread.  
The rolling planets beam with borrow'd rays,  
And all around reflect the solar blaze ;  
Attract each other,<sup>1</sup> and each other shun :  
And end their courses where they first begun.  
Far in the void unnumber'd worlds arise,  
And suns unnumber'd light the azure skies.  
Far beyond all, the God of heaven resides,  
Marks every orbit, every motion guides.

Thither the hero and the saint repair.  
Myriads of spirits are created there,  
Which amply people all the globe, and fill  
The human bodies ; such the Almighty's will.  
There, with immortal spirits at His feet,  
The Judge all wise and righteous holds His seat :  
The God eternal, in all climes adored  
By different names, Jehovah, Jove, or Lord,  
Before His throne our plaintive sorrows rise ;  
Our errors He beholds with pitying eyes :  
Those senseless portraits, figured by mankind,  
To paint His image, and omniscient mind.  
All who on earth's inferior confines breathe,  
Attend His summons through the gates of death.  
The eastern sage, with holy wisdom fraught,  
The sons of science, whom Confucius taught ;

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<sup>1</sup> Whether Newton's theory of attraction be admitted or not, it is certain that the celestial bodies, approaching and separating from each other by turns, appear to attract and repel one another.

Those who succeed in Zoroaster's<sup>1</sup> cause,  
And blindly yield submission to his laws :  
The pale inhabitants of Zembla's coast,  
Columbia's savage sons in error lost.  
The gazing Dervis looking vainly round,  
At God's right hand no prophet to be found.  
The Bonze, with gloomy, penitential brow,  
No comfort finding in his rigid vow.

At once enlighten'd, all the dead await,  
To hear their sentence and approaching fate.  
That mighty Being, whose extended view,  
And boundless knowledge, looks all nature through,  
The past, the present, and the future times,  
Rewards their love or punishes their crimes.  
The prince approach'd not, in those realms of light,  
The throne, invisible to human sight ;  
Whence issues forth the terrible decree,  
Which man presumes too fondly to foresee.

"Is God," said Henry to himself, "unjust,  
That God in whom all earthly beings trust ?  
Will the Almighty not vouchsafe to save  
For want of knowledge which he never gave ?  
Expect religion where it never shone ;  
And judge the universe by laws unknown ?  
His hand created all, and all will find  
That heaven's high king is merciful, and kind.  
His voice informs the whole, and every part ;  
Fair nature's laws are stamp'd on every heart :

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<sup>1</sup> In Persia, the Guebers have a religion of their own, which they pretend to be the religion founded by Zoroaster, and which appears less insensate than other superstitions, since they render a secret worship to the sun, as an image of the Creator.

Nature, the same through each inferior clime,  
Pure and unspotted to the end of time.  
By this the pagan's sentence will proceed,  
And this accomplish'd, they are His indeed."

While thus, with reason narrow and confined,  
On truths mysterious he employ'd his mind,  
A solemn, awful voice was heard around ;  
All Heaven, all Nature, shudder'd at the sound.  
Such were the thunders, which from Sinai's brow,  
Diffused a horror through the plains below.  
Each seraph glow'd with adoration's fire,  
And silence reign'd through all the cherub choir.  
The rolling spheres the sacred accents caught,  
And truths divine to other planets taught.  
"Distrust thy mental powers, nor blindly stray,  
As Pride or feeble Reason points the way ;  
The High Invisible who rules above,  
Escapes thy knowledge, but demands thy love.  
His power and justice punish, and control  
Each wilful error of the stubborn soul.  
To pure devotion be thy heart consign'd,  
When Truth's effulgent orb illumines thy mind."  
These were the sounds, when, through the fields of light,  
A rapid whirlwind from the ethereal height  
Convey'd the prince to dark and dreary climes,  
Like those where Chaos reign'd in elder times.  
No solar influence, like its author mild,  
Diffuses comfort through the savage wild,  
Angels abhor the desolated waste,  
Which life's fair, fruitful blossom never graced.  
Confusion, death, each terror of despair,  
Fix'd on his throne, presides a tyrant there.  
O heavens ! what shrieks of woe, what piteous cries,

What sulphurous smoke, what horrid flames arise !  
What fiends, cried Bourbon, to these climes retreat !  
What gulfs, what torrents, burst beneath our feet !  
Behold, the saint return'd, the gates of hell,  
Which justice form'd, where impious spirits dwell.  
Come, view the dismal regions<sup>1</sup> of distress ;  
These paths are always easy of access.  
There squint-eyed Envy lay, whose poisonous breath  
Consumes the verdure of each laurel wreath :  
In night's impenetrable darkness bred,  
She hates the living, but applauds the dead.  
Her sparkling eyes, which shun the orb of day,  
Perceiving Henry, Envy turn'd away.  
Near her, self-loving, self-admiring Pride,  
And downcast Weakness, ever pale, reside,—  
Weakness, which yields to each persuasive crime,  
And crops the flower of virtue in its prime.  
Ambition there with headstrong fury raves,  
With thrones surrounded, sepulchres, and slaves.  
Submissive, meek Hypocrisy was nigh,  
Hell in her heart, all heaven in her eye.  
There Interest, father of all crimes, appear'd,  
And blinded Zeal, by cruelty revered.  
These wild, tyrannic rulers of mankind,  
When Henry came, their savage air resign'd.  
Their impious troop ne'er reach'd his purer soul,  
Such virtue yields not to their mad control.  
“ Who comes,” they cried, “ to break the peaceful rest  
Of night eternal, and these shades molest ?”

Our hero view'd the subterraneous scene,

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<sup>1</sup> Theologians have not decided, as an article of faith, that hell is in the centre of the earth, as it was in pagan theology. Some have placed it in the sun : here it is located in a globe, destined expressly for this purpose.

And slowly travell'd through the ranks obscene.  
Louis led on : " O heaven ! is that the hand,  
Which murder'd Valois at the League's command ?  
Is that the monster ? Yes, I know him well,  
His arm still holds the parricidal steel.  
While barbarous priests proclaim the wretch divine,  
And place his portrait on the hallow'd shrine,  
Though Rome and faction celebrate<sup>1</sup> his name  
To hymns and praises, hell denies his claim."

" Princes and kings," the honor'd saint replied,  
" Meet in these realms the punishment of pride.  
Behold those tyrants, once adored by all,  
Whose height but served to aggrandize their fall.  
God pours his vengeance on the sceptred crowd,  
For vice committed, and for crimes allow'd.  
Death, from on high, commission'd to destroy,  
Cut short the transport of each wayward joy.  
No pomp of greatness could the victim save ;  
Their beams of glory set within the grave. ✓  
Now is no civil, sly deceiver near,  
To whisper error in the sovereign's ear.  
Once injured Truth the sword of terror draws,  
Displays each crime, and indicates her cause.  
Behold yon heroes tremble at her nod,  
Esteem'd as tyrants in the eyes of God.  
Now on their heads descend those thunders dire,  
Form'd by themselves to set the world on fire.

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<sup>1</sup> The regicide, Jacques Clement, was enlogized at Rome in the pulpits where funeral orations on Henry III should have been pronounced. His portrait was placed with the eucharist upon the altars in Paris. Cardinal de Retz relates, that on the day of the Battle of the Barricades, during the minority of Louis XIV, he saw a citizen wearing a gorget, upon which was engraved a likeness of this monk, with these words : " Saint-Jacques Clement."

Close by their side, the weakest of mankind,  
Each listless, feeble monarch is reclined ;  
Whose indolence disgraced the subject land,  
Mere airy forms, mere nothings in command.”  
Henry beheld upon these kings await,  
Their once imperious ministers of State ;—  
Proud, avaricious, of immoral lives,  
Who sold what honors Mars or Themis gives :  
Sold what our fathers purchased by their blood,  
And all that’s precious to the great and good.  
And tell me now, ye pamper’d sons of ease,  
Must tender spirits dwell in climes like these ?  
You, who on flowery couches pass away  
The tranquil moments of life’s useless day ;  
Shall virtue’s friends in fiery torments roll,  
Whose faults have risen from expanse of soul ?  
Shall one mistaken, momentary joy,  
Maturer Wisdom’s plenteous fruits destroy ?

“Is this,” he cried, “the lot of human race—  
Condemn’d, for endless ages, to distress ?  
If all mankind one common hell devours,<sup>1</sup>  
Eternal tortures close our transient hours,  
Who was not more in non-existence blest ?  
Who would not perish in his mother’s breast ?

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<sup>1</sup> It is calculated that there are more than nine hundred and fifty millions of men upon the earth ; the number of Catholics is about fifty millions. If the twentieth part of these are to be the elect, it is a large allowance. Then there are at present upon the earth 947,500,000 men who are destined to the eternal pains of hell ; and, as the human race repairs its losses about every twenty years, it will be found by averaging the most peopled times with the least peopled times, and counting six thousand years since the Creation, that there are already three hundred times nine hundred and forty-seven millions of the damned. Besides, the Jews having been a hundred times less numerous than the Catholics, the number might be prodigiously augmented. This calculation was certainly enough to bring tears from the eyes of Henry IV.



Far happier man ! had God's creative hand  
Form'd him less free, in innocence to stand :  
Had God, thus awfully severe, bestow'd  
The sole capacity of doing good."

" Think not," the saint replied, " that sinners feel  
Vengeance too heavy, or deserve not hell.  
Think not the great Creator of mankind,  
To these, His works, is cruel or unkind.  
Lord of all beings, He presides above,  
With mercy infinite, and boundless love.  
Though mortals see the tyrant in their God,  
Parental tenderness directs His rod.  
Let not these horrid scenes thy soul alarm ;  
Compassion checks the fury of His arm ;  
Nor endless punishments inflicts on those  
Whose faults from human imperfection rose :  
Whose pleasures, follow'd by remorse, have been •  
The transient cause of momentary sin."<sup>1</sup>  
Such were his accents ; to the realms of light  
Both are convey'd with instantaneous flight.  
Infernal darkness shuns those flowery plains,  
Where spotless innocence forever reigns.  
There in the floods of purest ether play  
The beams refulgent of eternal day.  
Each blooming scene seraphic joys bestow'd,  
And Henry's soul with unknown raptures glow'd.  
There tranquil pleasure spreads her every charm,  
Which thought can fancy, or which heaven can form.  
No cares solicit, and no passions move ;  
But all is govern'd by angelic love.

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<sup>1</sup> Venial faults, and purgatory, may be understood as spoken of here.  
The ancients admitted this idea, and it is clearly expressed in Virgil.

Far other love than that of wild desires,  
Which grosser sense and luxury inspires.  
The bright, the sacred flame, on earth unknown,  
Which burns in heaven, and heavenly minds alone  
Its chaste endearments all their hours employ,  
And endless wishes meet with endless joy.  
There dwell true heroes; there each pious sage,  
And monarchs, once the glory of their age.  
Thence Charlemagne and Clovis<sup>1</sup> turn their eyes  
On Gallia's empire from the azure skies :  
On golden thrones forever placed sublime,  
And clad in honors unimpair'd by time.  
There fiercest foes the happy union prove  
Of pure affection, and a brother's love.  
Louis<sup>2</sup> the wise, amid the royal band,  
Tall as a cedar, issues his command,—  
Louis, of France the glory and the pride,  
Who ruled our realms with Justice by his side.  
Oft would he pardon, oft relief supply,  
And wipe the falling tear from every eye.  
D'Amboise<sup>3</sup> is still commission'd to attend ;  
His faithful minister and warmest friend.  
To him alone was Gallia's honor dear :  
To him alone her homage was sincere.  
His gentler hands were sullied not with blood ;  
His every wish was centred in her good.

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<sup>1</sup> It is needless to examine in a poem whether or not Clovis, Charlemagne, Francis I, Charles V, etc., are saints ; it is sufficient that they have been great kings, and that they ought to be regarded as happy, since they lived and died like Christians.

<sup>2</sup> Louis XII is the only king who received the name of Father of the People.

<sup>3</sup> "In the mean time, George d'Amboise died. He was justly loved by France and by his king, because he had an equal love for both."—(Mézeray, *Grande Histoire*.)

Oh, spotless manners ! bright and halcyon days !  
 Worthy eternal memory and praise.  
 Then wholesome laws adorn'd and bless'd the State :  
 Subjects were happy, and the monarch great.  
 Return, ye halcyon days, with golden wing,  
 And equal blessings, equal honors bring.  
 Virtue, descend ! another Louis frame,  
 As rich in merit, and as great in fame.

Farther remote, those worthy heroes stood,  
 Careless of life, and prodigal of blood,  
 Who died with transport for the public weal ;  
 Led on by duty, not enraged by zeal.  
 Brave Montmorency,<sup>1</sup> Trimouille,<sup>2</sup> Clisson, Foix,  
 Who fought their passage to those fields of joy.  
 There Guesclin<sup>3</sup> drinks of pleasure's purer springs :  
 Guesclin, the avenger, and the dread of kings.  
 There Bayard ;<sup>4</sup> there the Amazonian<sup>5</sup> dame,  
 The tottering throne's support, and England's shame.

<sup>1</sup> Montmorency. It would require a volume to specify the services done to the State by this family.

<sup>2</sup> Among many great men of this name, Guy de Trimouille is particularly alluded to. He was surnamed *The Valiant* ; he carried the oriflamme, and refused the high constable's sword in the reign of Charles VI.

Clisson (high constable, etc.) under Charles VI.

Gaston de Foix, duke de Nemours, and nephew of Louis XII. He was slain at the famous battle of Ravenna ; having received fourteen wounds, and defeated the enemy. Some editions name Dunois here.

<sup>3</sup> Guesclin. France owed her preservation to this great man, in the reign of Charles V. He conquered Castile, placed Henry of Transtamare upon the throne of Peter the Cruel, and was constable of France and Castile.

<sup>4</sup> Bayard (Pierre du Terrail, called the Knight without fear and without reproach). He knighted Francis I, after the battle of Marignano. He was slain in 1523, during the retreat of Rebec.

<sup>5</sup> Joan d'Arc, known by the name of the Maid of Orleans. She was a servant-maid at an inn, and born at the village of Domremy upon the Meuse : being superior to her sex in strength of body and bravery of mind, she was employed by the Count de Dunois to retrieve the fortunes of Charles VII. She was taken in a sally at Compeigne in the year 1430,

"These," cried the saint, "who now possess the skies,  
Like thee, with glory dazzled Europe's eyes.  
Virtue alone, their simpler minds could move :  
The Church was gladden'd by their filial love.  
Like me, they honor'd truth's diviner name ;  
Our worship uniform, our Church the same.  
Say, why does Bourbon scorn her gentle laws,  
Or why defend a schism's weaker cause?"

Time, with incessant flight, prepared to roam,  
Quits and revisits this terrific dome,  
And pours, with plenteous hand, on all mankind  
The good and evil for each race design'd.  
An altar high, of massy iron, bears  
The fatal annals of succeeding years.  
Where God's own hand has mark'd, nor mark'd in vain,  
Each transient pleasure, each severer pain.  
There Liberty, that haughty slave, is bound,  
With chains invisible encircled round.

---

conducted to Rouen, tried as a sorceress in an ignorant and barbarous ecclesiastical court, and burned by the English, who ought to have honored her courage.

Monstrelet, a contemporaneous author, thus speaks of the Maid of Orleans :

"In the year 1428, there came to King Charles of France, at Chinon, a young girl aged twenty years, named Jeanne, who was dressed in the fashion of a man, and was from the region between Burgundy and Lorraine, of a city named Droimi, now called Domremy, pretty near to Vaucouleur; which girl Jeanne was, for a great space of time, housemaid at an inn; and was bold to ride horses, to lead them to drink, and to do other clever things which young girls are not accustomed to do," etc.

Every one knows how this maiden was employed to revive the courage of the French who required a miracle to arouse them. That they believed her to have been sent from God, is enough to give a poet the right to place her in heaven, among the heroes. Mézeray says, quite soberly, that Saint Michel the commander of the celestial army appeared to this maiden, etc. Be that as it may, if the French were too credulous to the Maid of Orleans, the English were too cruel in burning her, for they had nothing whereof to complain except her courage and their defeat.

Beneath the yoke she bends her stubborn head,  
Still unconstrain'd, unconscious of the deed.  
This suppliant turn that hidden chain supplies,  
Wisely conceal'd forever from her eyes.  
The Fates appear, her sentence to fulfil:  
Each action seems the product of free-will.

“From thence,” cried Louis, “on the human race  
Descends the influence of heavenly grace.  
In future times its power thy tongue shall tell:  
Its purer radiance all thy heart shall feel.  
Those precious moments God alone bestows;  
No mortal hastens, and no being knows.  
But oh, how slowly comes that period on,  
When God shall love, and own thee for his son!  
Too long shall weakness hide thy brighter rays;  
And lead thy steps through error's slippery ways.  
Teach him, kind heaven, the happier, better road;  
Shorten the days which part him from his God.

“But see what crowds in long succession press  
Through the vast region of unbounded space.  
These sacred mansions to thy view display  
The unborn offspring of some future day.  
All times and places are forever nigh,  
All beings present to Jehovah's eye.  
Here Fate has mark'd their destined hour of birth,  
Their rise, their grandeur, and their fall on earth.  
The various changes of each life to come,  
Their vices, virtues, and their final doom.  
Draw near, for Heaven allows us to foresee  
What kings and heroes shall descend from thee.  
That graceful personage is Bourbon's son,  
Form'd to support the glory of the crown.

The warlike leader shall his triumphs boast  
O'er Belgia's plains, and proud Iberia's coast.  
To deeds more noble shall his son aspire;  
And wreaths more splendid first adorn his sire."

On beds of lilies, near a towering throne,  
Two radiant forms before our hero shone.  
Monarchs they seem'd, of high, imperious pride,  
And Roman purple flow'd adown their side.  
A subject nation couch'd beneath their feet,  
And guards unnumber'd form'd the train complete.  
"These," said the saint, "are call'd to endless fame:  
In all things sovereigns, save the royal name.  
Richelieu and Mazarin, design'd by fate  
Immortal ministers of Gallia's State.  
To them shall Policy consign her aid,  
And fortune raise them from the altar's shade.  
Ruled by despotic power, shall France confess  
Great Richelieu's genius, Mazarin's address.  
One flies' with art before the rising storm:  
One braves all danger in it's fiercest form:  
Both to the princes of our royal blood,  
With hate relentless, enemies avow'd.  
With high ambition and with pride inspired,  
By all disliked, and yet by all admired;  
Their artful schemes and industry shall bring  
Plagues on their country, glory on their king.

"O thou, great Colbert, whose enlighten'd mind  
Schemes less extensive for our good design'd!

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<sup>1</sup> Cardinal Mazarin was obliged to leave the kingdom in the year 1651, notwithstanding he had the entire government of the queen regent. Cardinal Richelieu, on the contrary, always maintained his situation in spite of his enemies, and of the king, who was disgusted at his behavior.



No lustre equals, none excels thy own,  
Save that which gilds, and decorates the crown.  
Nursed by thy genius, heaven-born Plenty reigns,  
And pours her treasures over Gallia's plains.  
Colbert by generous deeds to glory rose :  
His only vengeance was to bless his foes.<sup>1</sup>  
Thus were dispensed the gifts of heavenly grace,  
By God's own confident, on Israel's race :  
That race, whose blasphemy could ne'er remove  
Or quench the beams of mercy and of love.

“ What troops of slaves before that monarch stand,<sup>2</sup>  
What numbers tremble at his high command !  
No king did Gallia ever yet obey  
With such profound submission to his sway.  
Though less beloved, more dreaded in her eyes,  
Like thee, he claims fair glory's richest prize.  
Firm in all dangers, in success too warm,  
When fortune smiles and conquest meets his arm,  
Himself shall crush, superior to intrigue,  
Full twenty nations join'd in powerful league.  
Praise shall attend him to his latest breath,  
Great in his life, but greater in his death.  
Thrice happy age ! when Nature's lavish hand  
With all her graces shall adorn the land.  
Thrice happy age ! when every art refined,  
Spreads her fair polish o'er the ruder mind.  
The Muse forever our retreats shall love  
More than the shades of Aganippe's grove.

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<sup>1</sup> The people, that blind and savage monster, held the great Colbert in such detestation, that they would have dug his body out of the ground ; but the approbation of men of sense, which at length prevailed, has rendered his name forever dear and respected.

<sup>2</sup> Louis XIV.

From sculptured stone the seeming accent flows ;  
With animated tints the canvas glows.  
What sons of science<sup>1</sup> in that period rise,  
Measure the universe, and read the skies !  
The purer ray of philosophic light  
Reveals all nature, and dispels the night.  
Presumptuous Error from their view retreats ;  
Truth crowns their labors, and their joy completes.  
Thy accents too, sweet Music, strike mine ear—  
Music, descended from the heavenly sphere.  
'Tis thine to soothe, to soften, and control  
Each wayward passion of the ruffled soul.  
Unpolish'd Greece, and Italy have own'd  
The strong enchantments of thy magic sound.  
The subjects ruled by Gallia's powerful king  
Shall bravely conquer, and as sweetly sing ;  
Shall join the poet's to the warrior's praise,  
And twine Bellona's with Apollo's bays.  
E'en now I see this second age of gold  
Produce a people of heroic mould.  
Here numerous armies skim before my sight ;  
There fly the Bourbons, eager for the fight.  
At once his master's terror and support,  
Great Condé<sup>2</sup> makes the flames of war his sport.  
Turenne more calmly meets the hostile power,

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<sup>1</sup> The Academy of Sciences, whose transactions are esteemed throughout all Europe.

<sup>2</sup> Louis de Bourbon, generally called the great Condé, and Henry, viscount de Turenne, have been regarded as the greatest generals of their time. They both gained very important victories, and acquired glory even in their defeats. The genius of the Prince de Condé seemed, as was said, more proper for a day of battle, and that of Turenne for a whole campaign. It is certain, at least, that Turenne gained considerable advantages over the great Condé at Gien, Etampes, Paris, Arras, and the battle of the Dunes. We shall not, however, attempt to decide which was the greater man.

In arms his equal, and in wisdom more.  
 Assemblage rare ! in Catinat<sup>1</sup> are seen  
 The hero's talents, and the sage's mien.  
 Known by his compass, Vauban,<sup>2</sup> from the tower,  
 Smiles at the tumult, and the cannon's roar.  
 England shall tell of Luxembourg's<sup>3</sup> renown,  
 In war invincible, at court unknown.  
 Onward I see the martial Villars<sup>4</sup> move  
 To wrest the thunders from the bird of Jove ;

<sup>1</sup> Marshal Catinat, born in 1637. He gained the battle of Staffarde and de la Marsaille ; and obeyed, without reluctance or a murmur, Marshal Villerois, who sent him orders without consulting him. He resigned his command with the utmost composure ; never complained of any person's treatment ; asked nothing of the king, and died like a true philosopher, at his country-seat, at Saint-Gratien. He never augmented or diminished his estate, and never for a moment acted unworthy his character as a man of temperance and moderation.

<sup>2</sup> Marshal Vauban, born in 1633, was the greatest engineer that ever lived. He repaired, upon a new plan of his own, no less than three hundred fortifications, and built thirty-three. He conducted fifty-three sieges, and was present at one hundred and forty actions. He left behind him, at his death, twelve manuscript volumes, full of projects for the public good, none of which has ever yet been executed. He was a member of the Academy of Sciences, and did more honor to it than any other person, by rendering mathematics subservient to the advantage of his country.

<sup>3</sup> Francis Henry de Montmorency, who took the name of Luxembourg, was marshal of France, and duke and peer of the realm. He gained the battle of Cassel, under the orders of Monsieur, the brother of Louis XIV, and, as commander-in-chief, won the celebrated victories of Mons, Fleurus, Steinkirk, and Nerwinde. He was confined to the Bastile, and exceedingly ill-treated by the ministry.

<sup>4</sup> It was the author's original design to mention no living character throughout the whole poem ; and the rule proposed has only been deviated from in favor of the Marshal Duke de Villars. He gained the battle of Frédelingue, and that of the first Hochstedt. It is remarkable that in this engagement he posted himself on the same spot of ground which the Duke of Marlborough afterwards occupied when he won that very signal victory of the second Hochstedt, so fatal to France. Upon resuming the command of the army, the marshal was afterwards engaged in the famous battle of Blangis, or Malplaquet, in which twenty thousand of the enemy were slain, and which was lost only when he fell wounded. In the year 1712, when the enemy threatened to proceed to Paris, and it was deliberated whether Louis XIV should not quit Versailles, the Marshal de

Conquest attends to bid the battle cease,  
And leaves him sovereign arbiter of peace.  
Denain shall own brave Villars to have been  
The worthy rival of the great Eugene.

“What princely youth<sup>1</sup> draws near, whose manly face  
United majesty and sweetness grace?  
See how unmoved!—O heavens! what sudden shade  
Conceals the beauties which his form display’d!  
Death flutters round; health, beauty, all is gone:  
He falls, just ready to ascend the throne.  
Him Heaven form’d for all that’s just and good:  
Descended, Bourbon, from thy royal blood.  
O gracious God! shall Fate but show mankind  
A flower so sweet, and virtues so refined?  
What could a soul so generous not obtain!  
What joys would France experience from his reign!  
Produced and nurtured by his fostering hand,  
Fair peace and plenty had enrich’d the land;  
Each day some new beneficence had brought.  
Oh, how shall Gallia weep! alarming thought!  
When one dark, silent sepulchre contains  
The son’s, the mother’s, and the sire’s remains!

“Fallen is the tree, and from it’s ruins springs  
A young successor to famed Gallia’s kings,—  
A tender shoot,<sup>2</sup> from whose increasing shade

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Villars defeated Prince Eugene at Denain, dislodged the enemy from their post at Marchiennes, raised the siege of Landrecies, took Douay, Quesnoy, and Bouchain, at discretion, and afterwards agreed upon a peace at Rastadt, in the king’s name, with the same Prince Eugene, the emperor’s plenipotentiary.

<sup>1</sup> The late Duke of Burgundy.

<sup>2</sup> This poem was composed during the infancy of Louis XV.

France may derive some salutary aid.  
Conduct him, Fleury, to the throne of truth ;  
Wait on his years, and cultivate his youth.  
Teach him self-knowledge, and, if Fleury can,  
Teach him that Louis is no more than man.  
Inspire each virtue which can life adorn ;  
Kings for their subjects, not themselves, are born.  
And thou, O France, once more arise to-day—  
Resume thy majesty beneath his sway.  
Let every science which retired before,  
Crown thy fair temples, and adorn thy shore.  
The azure waters with thy navies sweep ;  
So wills the monarch of the hoary deep.  
See, from the Nile, the Euxine, and the Ind,  
Each port by nature, or by art design'd ;  
Commerce aloud demands thee for her seat,  
And spreads her richest treasures at thy feet.  
Adieu to terror, and adieu to war,  
The peaceful olive be thy future care.

“ Pursued by envy and distraction’s crew,  
A chief<sup>1</sup> renown’d advances to the view :  
Easy, not weak, when glory spurs him on,  
Engaged by novelties, by trifles won.  
Though luxury display a thousand charms,  
And smiling pleasure court her to his arms,  
Yet shall he keep all Europe in suspense,  
By artful politics and manly sense.  
The world shall move as Orleans shall guide,  
And every science flourish at his side :  
Empire, my son, himself shall never reach ;  
’Tis his the art of government to teach.”

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<sup>1</sup> A true portrait of Philippe, duke d’Orleans, regent of the kingdom.

Now burst the lightning from the opening skies,  
And Gallia's standard waved before their eyes.  
Iberia's troops, array'd in arms complete,  
The German eagle crush'd beneath their feet.  
When thus the saint : " No more remains the trace  
Of Charles the Fifth, his glory, or his race.  
Each earthly being has its final hour ;  
Eternal wisdom let us all adore—  
From thence all human revolutions spring :  
E'en Spain from Bourbon shall request a king.  
Illustrious Philip shall receive the crown,  
And sit as monarch on Iberia's throne."  
Surprise was soon succeeded by delight,  
And Henry's soul enraptured at the sight.  
" Repress thy transports," cried the saint, " and dread  
This great event, this present to Madrid.  
Say, who can fathom Heaven's conceal'd intent?  
Dangers may come, and Paris may repent.  
O Philip ! O my sons ! shall France and Spain  
Thus meet, and never be disjoin'd again !  
How long shall fatal politics' forbear  
To light the flames of discord and of war ?"


Thus Louis spoke—when, lo ! the scene withdrew :  
Each object vanish'd from our hero's view ;  
The sacred portals closed before his eyes,  
And sudden darkness overspread the skies.  
Far in the east, Aurora, moving on,  
Unlock'd the golden chambers of the sun.  
Night's sable robe o'er other climes was spread,  
Each dream retired, and every flitting shade.

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<sup>1</sup> At the time this was written, the royal house of France and the royal house of Spain seemed disunited.



The prince arose, with heavenly ardor fired—  
Unusual vigor all his soul inspired.  
Fear and respect, great Bourbon, now were thine;  
Full on thy brow sat majesty divine.  
Thus, when before the tribes, great Moses stood,  
Return'd at length from Sinai, and from God,  
His eyeballs flash'd intolerable light,  
Each prostrate Hebrew shudder'd at the sight.





THE HENRIADE.

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CANTO VIII.

## THE ARGUMENT.

The Earl of Egmont comes to assist Mayne and the League. Battle of Ivry, in which Mayne is defeated and Egmont slain. Valor and clemency of Henry the Great.

## CANTO THE EIGHTH.

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DEJECTED by their loss, the States appear  
Less haughty, and assume an humbler air ;  
Henry such terror in their hearts had wrought,  
Their king-creating schemes were all forgot.  
Wavering and weak in counsel, and afraid  
To crown their idol Mayne, or to degrade,  
By vain decrees they labor to complete  
And ratify a power, not given him yet.

This self-commission'd chief,<sup>1</sup> this king uncrown'd,  
In chains of iron rule his faction bound ;  
His willing slaves, obedient to his laws,  
Resolve to fight and perish in his cause.  
Thus flush'd with hope, to council he convenes  
The haughty lords, on whom his fortune leans :  
Lorrains,<sup>2</sup> Nemours, la Châtre, Canillac,  
Joyeuse<sup>3</sup> inconstant, and Saint Paul, Brissac.

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<sup>1</sup> He was declared by the parliament, which continued attached to him, Lieutenant-general of the State, and kingdom of France.

<sup>2</sup> The Lorrains. The Chevalier d'Aumale, so often spoken of, and his brother the duke, were of the house of Lorraine.

Charles Emmanuel, duke de Nemours, was half-brother of the Duke de Mayenne.

La Châtre was one of the marshals of the League.

<sup>3</sup> This is the same Joyeuse spoken of in the first note to the fourth canto. Saint Paul, a soldier of fortune, was made marshal by the Duke de Mayenne. He was slain by the Duke de Guise, son of the Balafré.

Brissac joined the League, through indignation against Henry III, who said that he was useless either upon the land or the sea. He afterwards

They came : despair, and unextinguish'd hate,  
And malice on their faded features sate ;  
Some tremble in their peace, and feebly tread,  
Faint with the loss of blood in battle shed ;  
But keen resentment prompts them to repair  
Their losses, and revenge the wounds they bear.  
Before the chief their sullen ranks they range,  
And grasp their shining arms, and vow revenge.  
So the fierce sons of earth, as fable feigns,  
Where Pelion overlooks Thessalia's plains,  
With mountains piled on mountains, vainly strove,  
To scale the everlasting throne of Jove.  
When sudden, on a car of radiant light  
Exalted, Discord flash'd upon their sight ;  
"Courage," she said ; "'tis now the times demand  
Your fix'd resolves : lo ! succor is at hand."  
First ran d'Aumale, and joyful, from afar  
Beheld the Spanish lances gleam in air ;  
Then cried aloud, "'Tis come ; the expected aid,  
So oft demanded, and so long delay'd."

Near to that hallow'd spot, where rest revered  
The relics of our kings, their march appear'd ;  
The groves of polish'd spears, the harness bound  
With circling gold, the shining helms around,  
Against the sun with full reflection play,  
Rival his light, and shed a second day.  
To meet their march the roaring rabble went,  
And hail'd the mighty chief Madrid had sent.  
That chief was Egmont,<sup>1</sup> famed for martial fire—

---

made secret overtures to Henry IV to open to him the gates of Paris, in consideration of receiving the baton of the Marshal of France.

<sup>1</sup> The Count d'Egmont, son of Lamoral, count d'Egmont, who was beheaded at Brussels with the Prince de Horn, June 5, 1568.

The son remaining attached to the party of Philip II, king of Spain, was



Ambitious son of an unhappy sire ;  
At Brussels first he drew the vital air.  
His country's weal was all his father's care ;  
For that, the rage of tyrants he defied,  
And in the cause of freedom bravely died.  
The servile son, as base as he was proud,  
Fawn'd on that hand which shed his father's blood ;  
For sordid interest, join'd his country's foes,  
And fought for France, regardless of her woes.  
Him Philip station'd on the banks of Seine,  
Both as a guard and counsellor to Mayne ;  
Nor doubted Mayne but slaughter and dismay  
Should spread to Bourbon's tent, when Egmont led the  
way.  
With heedless arrogance their march they drew,  
And Henry's heart exulted at the view :  
Gods ! how his eager hopes anticipate  
And meet the moment that decides his fate !

Their streams where Iton<sup>1</sup> and fair Eure lead,  
By nature blest, a fertile plain is spread ;  
No wars had yet approach'd the peaceful scene,  
No warrior's footstep press'd the flowery green :  
The shepherds there, while civil rage destroy'd  
The regions round, their happy hours enjoy'd.  
Screen'd by their poverty, they seem'd secure  
From lawless rapine and the soldier's power,

---

sent to the aid of the Duke de Mayenne, at the head of eighteen hundred lancers. On entering Paris, he received the compliments of the city. The person who addressed him, praised, during the course of his speech, his father. "Do not speak of him," said the count ; "he deserved death, he was a traitor : " words which were the more to be condemned, as he spoke to rebels, whose cause he had come to defend.

<sup>1</sup> The battle of Ivry took place, March 14, 1590, on a plain between the Iton and the Eure.

Nor heard beneath their humble roofs the jar  
Of arms, or clamor of the sounding war.

Thither each hostile leader his array  
Directs, and desolation marks their way ;  
A sudden horror strikes the trembling floods,  
The frightened shepherds seek the sheltering woods,  
The partners of their grief attend their flight,  
And bear their weeping infants from the sight.

Ye hapless natives of this sweet recess !  
Charge not at least your king with your distress :  
For peace he courts the combat, and his hand  
Shall shed the bounteous blessing o'er the land ;  
He shares your sorrows, and shall end your woes,  
Nor seeks you, but to save you from your foes.

Along the ranks he darts his piercing eyes ;  
Swift as the winds his foaming courser flies,  
Who, of his burden proud, hears with delight  
The trumpet's sound, and scents the promised fight.

Crown'd with his laurels, at their master's side  
A well distinguish'd group of warriors ride :  
D'Aumont,<sup>1</sup> beneath five kings a chief renown'd,  
Biron,<sup>2</sup> whose name bore terror in the sound,

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<sup>1</sup> Jean d'Aumont, marshal of France, who did wonders at the battle of Ivry, was the son of Pierre d'Aumont, gentleman of the bedchamber, and of Françoise de Sully, heiress of the ancient house of Sully. He served under kings Henry II, Francis II, Charles IX, Henry III, and Henry IV.

<sup>2</sup> Henry de Goutant de Biron, marshal of France, and grand master of the artillery, was a man of war. At Ivry, he commanded the corps de reserve, and contributed to the successful termination of the battle by falling upon the enemy at the proper moment. He said to Henry the Great, after the victory: "Sire, you have done what Biron should have done, and Biron, what the king should have done." This marshal was killed by a cannon-shot, in 1592, at the siege of Eprenai.

His son,<sup>1</sup> whom toil nor danger could restrain,  
 Who soon, alas!—but he was faithful then;<sup>2</sup>  
 Crillon and Sully,<sup>3</sup> by the guilty fear'd,

<sup>1</sup> Charles de Gontaut de Biron, marshal and duke and peer, was the son of the former. He conspired against Henry IV, and was beheaded in the court of the Bastile, in 1620.

<sup>2</sup> Imitation of Racine, *Britannicus*, Act IV, scene 2.

<sup>3</sup> Rosny, afterwards duke de Sully, superintendent of finances, grand master of artillery, marshal of France after the death of Henry IV, received seven wounds at the battle of Ivry. He was born at Rosny in 1559, and died at Villebon in 1641. Thus he had seen Henry II and Louis XIV. He was the only man to whom the baton of marshal of France was ever given as a mark of disfavor: he received it in exchange for the office of grand master of artillery, which the queen regent took away from him in 1614. He was a very brave soldier, and a still better minister; incapable of deceiving the king, and of being deceived by financiers. He could not be moved by courtiers whose avidity is insatiable, and who found in him a severity perfectly conformed to the economy of Henry IV. They called him the *Negative*, and said that the word *yes* never went out of his mouth. Such virtue pleased no one but his master; and the death of Henry IV was the signal for his disgrace. Louis XIII called him to court, a few years afterwards, to obtain his advice. He came, though with great repugnance. The young courtiers, who governed Louis XIII, tried, according to custom, to ridicule this old minister, who now made his appearance with the dress and airs of a time long past. The Duke de Sully observing them, said to the king: "Sire, when the king, your father, of glorious memory, did me the honor to consult me, we never began our conversation until the buffoons and mountebanks of the court had all been sent into the ante-chamber."

His memoirs were composed by himself during his retirement from the court. They are written in a simple but somewhat diffuse style, and show the rare honesty of the man.

He was never willing to change his religion; still, he was the first to advise Henry IV to go to mass. Cardinal Duperron exhorting him, one day, to abandon Calvinism, he replied to him: "I will become a Catholic, when you shall have suppressed the gospel; for it is so opposed to the Roman Church, that I cannot believe that both were inspired by the same spirit."

The pope wrote to him, on a certain occasion, praising in the highest terms the wisdom of his ministry; and, like a good pastor, closed his letter with a prayer to God that his wandering sheep might be brought back, at the same time conjuring the duke to return to the true faith. The duke replied to him in the same tone; assuring him that he would never cease to pray to God for the conversion of his Holiness. This letter is in his memoirs.

[Writers create the reputation of ministers. To judge them, it is neces-

Chiefs whom the League detested, yet revered ;  
Turenne, whose virtues and unrivall'd fame,  
Won the fair honors of the Bouillon name—

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sary not only to know the principles of administration, but also to have read the laws, the regulations which ministers have made, and to know what has been the influence of these laws, of these regulations, upon the entire nation, and upon different provinces. No one takes this trouble; and ministers are consequently judged on the word of historians or political writers.

Sully and Colbert are striking examples of this. Under Louis XIV, men of letters were in profound ignorance in regard to every thing concerning the government; and men who were engaged in business were scarcely able to write two sentences legibly. The system itself turned men of every rank towards business pursuits. Very many were engaged in commerce; and as Colbert had made a number of regulations touching manufactures, as he had encouraged maritime commerce, and formed companies, he was held up by all writers as a model minister. Political science, however, was making considerable progress; efforts were made to base it upon general and fixed principles, a few of which were found. A great number of defects were observed in the administration of Colbert; but it was necessary to offer another object for public admiration, and Sully was selected. The choice was fortunate. Minister, confidant, and friend of a king whose memory is cherished and respected, he had preserved the reputation of a man of extraordinary virtue, and strict honesty; he had been a great economist of the public treasury; and for these reasons was put up in opposition to Colbert. Things were carried even further: it was supposed that each of these ministers had a system of administration; that these systems were opposed; that one favored agriculture, while the other sacrificed it to the encouragement of manufactures. But by reading the laws made by them, it is easy to see that neither of them ever had a system; at that period, it was impossible to have any. Sully was superior to Colbert, because he opposed courageously the expenses which Henry, through generosity or feebleness, was willing to incur; while Colbert encouraged the taste of Louis XIV for feasts and parades: because Sully merited the confidence of Henry IV by sacrificing for him his possessions and his blood; while Colbert, after having gained the confidence of Mazarin, by enabling him to increase his wealth, obtained that of Louis XIV, by becoming the accuser of Fouquet and the instrument of his destruction: because Sully, the terror of courtiers, was the friend of the people; while Colbert sacrificed the people to the court.

Sully encouraged commerce in grain only, by giving permissions to export it somewhat more frequently than was done during the time of Colbert; but he also caused it to be purchased, a thing which a minister, even the most corrupt, would not dare to confess in our day.

Both encouraged manufactures only by gifts and privileges. Neither of them undertook to render the imposts less onerous. If they were less severe under Sully, credit is to be given not so much to his character as

Ill-fated power, alas ! and ill maintain'd,<sup>1</sup>  
 Crush'd in the birth, and lost as soon as gain'd.  
 His crest amid the band brave Essex rears,  
 And as a palm beneath our skies appears ;  
 Among our elms the lofty stranger shoves  
 His growth, as if he scorn'd the native groves.  
 From his bright casque, with orient gems array'd,  
 And burnish'd gold, a starry lustre play'd ;  
 Dear, valued gifts ! with which his mistress strove  
 Less to reward his courage, than his love.  
 Ambitious chief ! the mighty bulwark grown  
 Of Gallia's prince, and darling of his own.  
 There, too, were Trimouille,<sup>2</sup> Clermont, and Feuquières,

to circumstances, which would not have permitted this abuse of royal authority.

In a word, Sully was a virtuous man for the age in which he lived, because it is impossible to reproach him with any act regarded as vile or criminal at that period ; but it cannot be said that he was a great minister, and with still less propriety can he be held up as a model. A general who, at the present day, should conduct a war after the manner of Guesclin, would probably be beaten.

Sully had faults and weaknesses. The friend of Henry IV, he was too jealous of his favor. Haughty among his equals, he exhibited all the meanness of vanity with his inferiors. His probity was incorruptible ; but he loved riches, and neglected none of the means then permitted to be used in acquiring them. Compelled to go into retirement after the death of Henry IV, he had the weakness to regret his place, and to conduct himself, upon some occasions, as if he desired to take part in the unstable and stormy government of Louis XIII.]—K.

Nangis, a man of great merit, and of true virtue. He advised Henry III not to assassinate the Duke de Guise, but to judge him according to the laws.

Crillon was surnamed the Brave. He offered Henry IV to fight this same Duke de Guise. It was to this Crillon that Henry the Great wrote : "Go, hang yourself, brave Crillon ; we have had an action at Arques, and you were not there. . . . Adieu, brave Crillon ; I love you, right or wrong."

<sup>1</sup> The sovereignty of Sedan, acquired by Henry of Turenne, was lost by Frederic-Maurice, duke de Bouillon, his son, who having entered into the conspiracy of Cinq-Mars against Louis XIII, or rather against the Cardinal de Richelieu, gave up Sedan to save his life. In exchange he received several estates, which afforded him more revenue, but less power.

<sup>2</sup> Claude, duke de la Trinouille, was at the battle of Ivry. He was a



Unhappy Nesle, happy Lesdiguières.<sup>1</sup>  
 Such was the monarch's train. With steadfast air  
 And firm, they wait the signal of the war.  
 Glad omens from their Henry's eyes they took,  
 And read their conquest sure in his inspiring look.

'Twas then, afflicted with inglorious dread,  
 Unhappy Mayne perceived his courage fled.  
 Whether, at length, his boding heart divines  
 The wrath of heaven on his unjust designs ;  
 Whether the soul, prophetic of our doom,  
 Foresees the dreary train of ills to come ;  
 Whate'er the cause, he feels a chilling fear,  
 But veils it with a show of seeming cheer,  
 Inspires his troops with ardor of renown,  
 And fills their hearts with hopes that dwell not in his own.

But Egmont at his side, with glory fired,  
 And the rash confidence his youth inspired,  
 Flush'd for the fight, and eager to display  
 His prowess, chides his infamous delay.  
 As when the Thracian courser from afar  
 Hears the shrill trumpet and the sound of war,  
 A martial fire illumines his vivid eye ;  
 He neighs, he snorts, he bears his head on high ;  
 Impatient of restraint, he scorns the rein,  
 And swift as lightning scours along the plain !

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man of great courage, boundless ambition, great wealth, and was regarded as one of the principal leaders among the Calvinists. He died at the age of thirty-eight years.

Balzac de Clermont d'Entraques, uncle of the famous Marquise de Verneuil, was slain at the battle of Ivry. Feuquières and De Nesle, captains of fifty men, were also slain at this battle.

<sup>1</sup> Never did man more truly merit the title of fortunate : he began by being a simple soldier, and ended by being high constable, under Louis XIII.



Such Egmont seem'd. With beating heart he stood,  
And in his eye the rage of battle glow'd.  
E'en now he ponders his approaching fame,  
And looks on conquest as his rightful claim.  
Alas! he dreams not that his pride shall gain  
Naught but a grave, in Ivry's fatal plain.

Bourbon, at length, drew near, and thus inspired  
His ardent warriors, whom his presence fired :  
“ Ye sons of France! your king<sup>1</sup> is at your head—  
You see your foes, then follow where I lead ;  
Mark well this waving plume amid the fight,  
Nor let the tempest shade it from your sight ;  
To that alone direct your constant aim,  
Still sure to find it in the road to fame.”  
Thus spoke the chief: his bands exulting hear,  
And with new fury court the glorious war ;  
Then march'd, and as he went, his pious breast  
With silent prayers the God of hosts address'd.  
At once the legions rush, with headlong pace,  
Behind their chiefs, and snatch the middle space.  
So, where the seas with narrow frith divide  
Cantabria's coast from Afric's desert side ;  
When eastern storms along the channel sweep,  
Urging, in angry contest, deep 'gainst deep,  
Earth trembles at the shock, the sheeted brine  
Invades the skies, forbids the sun to shine,  
And Moors, affrighted by the hideous gloom,  
Sink to the earth, convinced 'tis nature's doom.

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<sup>1</sup> The words used by Henry IV at the battle of Ivry, were: “ Rally around my white plume; you will always see it on the road to honor and to glory !”

The deadly musket, lengthen'd to a spear,<sup>1</sup>  
Increases, now, the carnage far and near—  
Strikes a twin death, and can at once afford  
The scourge of flame, and havoc of the sword.  
The firm earth trembles 'neath the warriors' feet,  
As breast to breast in conflict dread they meet ;  
Despair and horror seize them on the road,  
And shame of flight, and impious thirst of blood.  
Here, from his stronger son the father flies—  
There, by the brother's arm the brother dies.  
Nature is shock'd, and Eure's flooded shore  
Shrinks with abhorrence from the streams of gore.  
Bourbon his path at once to glory clears,  
Through bristly forests of protended spears ;  
O'er many a crested helm his courser rides,  
While near him calm and faithfully abides  
Great Mornay,<sup>2</sup> thoughtful and intent alone  
On Henry's life, regardless of his own.  
So, veil'd in human shape, the poets feign  
The gods engaged in arms on Phrygia's plain ;  
"So when an angel by divine command,  
With rising tempests shakes a guilty land—  
Well pleased the Almighty's orders to perform,  
He rides the whirlwind, and directs the storm."  
The royal chief in hurried accents tells  
What he desires, what hope his soul impels ;  
Mornay, attentive, hears his firm command,  
And bears it where the distant leaders stand.  
The distant leaders to their troops convey

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<sup>1</sup> The bayonet at the end of the gun was not used until a long time after. The name bayonet comes from Bayonne, the place where these weapons were first made.

<sup>2</sup> Duplessis-Mornay had two horses killed under him in this battle. He exhibited all the coolness for which he is here praised.

The word ; their troops receive it and obey.  
They part, they join, in various forms are seen ;  
One soul informs and guides the vast machine.  
Returning now in haste, good Mornay seeks  
The prince, accosts, and guards him while he speaks.  
But still the stoic warrior keeps unstain'd  
With human blood his inoffensive hand,  
The king alone employs his generous thought,  
For his defence the embattled field he sought ;  
Detesting war, and singularly brave,  
Can death confront, though death he never gave.

Turenne,<sup>1</sup> with his accustom'd skill in war,  
The forces of Nemours had scatter'd far ;  
D'Ailly had fill'd the plain with dire alarms,  
Proud of his thirty years consumed in arms ;  
And spite of age the veteran still displays  
The wonted vigor of his youthful days.  
One warrior only dares in deadly strife  
To match his might : he, in the bloom of life,  
Commenced his march upon this fatal day,  
In glory's difficult and dangerous way.  
New in the bonds of Hymen, yet he fled  
The chaste endearments of his bridal bed,  
Disdain'd the trivial praise by beauty won,  
And panted for a soldier's fame alone.  
That cruel morn, accusing heaven in vain,  
And the cursed League, that call'd him to the plain,  
His beauteous bride with trembling fingers laced

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<sup>1</sup> Henry de la Tour, d'Orliègues, viscount de Turenne, marshal of France. Henry the great married him to Charlotte de la Mark, princess of Sedan, in 1591. On the night of his wedding, the marshal set out to take Stenay by assault.

His heavy corselet on her hero's breast,  
And cover'd with his helm of polish'd gold  
Those eyes, which still she languish'd to behold.

To Ailly then, the youth, despising fear,  
Spurs his proud steed, and lifts his quivering spear ;  
Their headlong coursers all remorseless tread  
Upon the maim'd, the dying, and the dead ;  
Poachy with blood, the turf and matted grass  
Sink fetlock deep beneath them as they pass.  
Onward the warriors come ; their shields sustain  
The shock ; their spears well pointed, but in vain,  
In scatter'd splinters shine upon the plain.  
So when two clouds, with thunder fraught, draw near  
And join their dark encounter in mid-air,  
While from their sides the lightning quivers round,  
Heaven roars, and mortals tremble at the sound.  
Now from their steeds, with unabated rage,  
Alighting swift, a closer war they wage ;  
Ran Discord to the scene, and near her stood  
Death's horrid spectre, pale, and smear'd with blood.  
Already shine their falchions in their hands ;  
No interfering power between them stands ;  
The doom is seal'd, their destiny commands :  
Full at each other's heart they aim alike,  
Nor knows their fury at whose heart they strike ;  
Their bucklers clash, thick strokes descend from high,  
And flakes of fire from their helmets fly ;  
Blood stains their hands, but still the temper'd plate  
Retards awhile and disappoints their hate.  
Each wondering at the long unfinish'd fight,  
Esteems his rival, and admires his might ;  
'Till d'Ailly with a vigorous effort found  
The pass, and stretch'd his foe upon the ground.

That foeman's eyes forever closed remain,  
And his loose helmet rolls along the plain ;  
Then saw the wretched chief, too surely known,  
The kindred features, and embraced his son.  
And now, with horror and remorse oppress'd,  
He turns the guilty steel against his breast.  
That just revenge his hastening friends oppose ;  
When furious from the dreadful scene he rose—  
Forth to the woods his cheerless journey sped,  
From arms forever and from glory fled,  
And in the covert of a shaggy den  
Dwells a sad exile from the ways of men.  
There, when the dawning day salutes the skies,  
And when at eve the chilling vapors rise,  
His unexhausted grief still flows the same,  
His voice repeats his son's lamented name.  
Tender alarms and boding terrors brought  
The bride, inquiring, to the fatal spot ;  
Uncertain of her doom, with anxious haste  
And faltering knees between the dead she pass'd,  
'Till stretch'd upon the plain her lord she spied,  
Then shriek'd, and sunk expiring at his side.  
The damps of death upon her temples hung,  
And feeble sounds scarce parted from her tongue  
Once more her eyes a last farewell essay'd,  
Once more her lips upon his lips she laid,  
Within her arms the lifeless body press'd,  
Then look'd, and sigh'd, and died upon his breast.

Deplored examples of rebellious strife,  
Ill-fated victims, father, son, and wife !  
Oh, may the sad remembrance of your woe  
Teach tears from ages yet unborn to flow,

With wholesome sorrow touch all future times,  
And save the children from their father's crimes.

But say, what chief disperses thus abroad  
The flying League, what hero, or what god ?  
'Tis Biron, 'tis his youthful arm o'erthrows  
And drives along the plain his scatter'd foes.  
D'Aumale beheld, and, maddening at the sight,  
"Stand fast," he cried, "and stay your coward flight ;  
Friends of the Guise and Mayne, their vengeance due,  
Rome, and the Church, and France expect from you ;  
Return, then, and your pristine force recall—  
Conquest is theirs who fight beneath d'Aumale !"   
Fosseuse, Joyeuse, and Beauvau all sustain  
Their part, and rally the disorder'd train.  
Before the van d'Aumale his station took,  
And the closed lines caught courage from his look.  
The chance of war now flows a backward course,  
Biron in vain withstands the driving force ;  
Nesle and Angenne within his sight are slain,  
And Parabère and Clermont press the plain—  
Himself scarce lived, so fast the purple tide  
Flow'd from his wounds ; far happier, had he died.  
A death so glorious, with unfading fame  
Forever had adorn'd the hero's name.

Soon learn'd the royal chief to what distress  
The youth was fallen, courageous to excess ;  
He loved him—not as monarchs condescend  
To love, but well and plainly, as a friend,  
Nor thought a subject's blood so mean a thing,  
A smile alone o'erpaid it from a king.  
Hail, heaven-born friendship ! the delight alone  
Of noble minds, and banish'd from the throne.



Eager he flies ; the generous fires that feed  
His heart, augment his vigor and his speed.  
He came, and Biron,<sup>1</sup> kindling at the view,  
His gather'd strength to one last effort drew.  
Cheer'd by the well-known voice, again he plies  
The sword ; all force before the monarch flies.  
The king redeems thee from the unequal strife,  
Rash youth ! be faithful, and deserve thy life.

Hark, a loud peal comes thundering from afar—  
'Tis Discord blows afresh the flames of war.  
To thwart the monarch's virtue, with new fires  
His fainting foes the beldam fiend inspires ;  
She winds her fatal trump, the woods around  
And mountains tremble at the infernal sound.  
Swift to d'Aumale the baleful notes impart  
Their power ; he feels the summons at his heart.  
Bourbon alone he seeks ; the boisterous throng  
Close at his heels tumultuous pour along.  
So the well-scented pack, long train'd to blood,  
Deep in the covert of a spacious wood,  
Bay the fierce boar to battle, and elate,  
With heedless wrath rush headlong on their fate ;  
The shrillness of the cheering horn provokes  
Their rage, and echoes from the distant rocks.  
Thus stood the monarch, by the crowd inclosed,  
A host against his single arm opposed ;  
No friend at hand, no welcome aid he found—  
Abandon'd, and by death encompass'd round.

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<sup>1</sup> The Duke de Biron was wounded at Ivry ; but it was at the battle of Fontaine-Française that Henry the Great saved his life. This event not being a principal fact, could, without impropriety, be changed as to time and place.

'Twas then St. Louis quick his strength renew'd,  
With tenfold force, and vigor unsubdued,—  
Firm as a rock poised on its base he stood,  
A rock that braves the blast, and scorns the flood.  
Who shall relate, alas! what heroes died  
In that dread hour on Eure's purple side!  
Shade of the first of kings, do thou diffuse  
Thy spirit o'er my song, be thou my muse!  
Now from afar his gathering nobles came;  
They died for Bourbon, and he fought for them,  
When Egmont rush'd with yet unrivall'd force,  
To check the storm, and thwart the monarch's course.

Long had the chief, misled by martial pride,  
Sought Henry through the combat far and wide,  
Nor cared he, so his venturous arm might meet  
That strife, for aught of danger or defeat.  
"Bourbon," he cried, "advance! behold a foe  
Prepared to plant fresh laurels on your brow;  
Now let your arm its utmost might display—  
Ours be the strife, let us decide the day."  
He spoke, and lo! portentous from on high,  
A stream of lightning shot along the sky,  
Slow peals of muttering thunder growl'd around;  
Beneath the trembling soldier shook the ground.  
Egmont, alas! a flattering omen draws,  
And dreams that heaven will combat in his cause;  
That partial nature in his glory shared,  
And by the thunder's voice his victory declared.  
At the first onset, with full force applied,  
His driving falchion reach'd the monarch's side.  
Fast flow'd a stream of trickling blood; though slight  
The wound, yet Egmont triumph'd at the sight.

But Bourbon,<sup>1</sup> unconcern'd, received the blow,  
And with redoubled ardor press'd his foe—  
Pleased when the field of glory could afford  
A conquest hardly earn'd, and worthy of his sword.  
The stinging wound served only to provoke  
His rage, and add new vigor to his stroke.  
He springs upon the blow ; the champion reels,  
And the keen edge within his bosom feels ;  
O'erthrown beneath the trampling hoof he lies,  
And death's dim shadow skims before his eyes ;  
He sees the dreary regions of the dead,  
And shrinks and trembles at his father's shade.

Then first, their leader slain, the Iberian host  
Declined the fight ; their vaunted spirit lost,  
Like a contagion their unwarlike fear  
Seized all the ranks, and flew from van to rear.  
General and soldier felt the same dismay ;

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<sup>1</sup> It was not at Ivry, but at the battle of Aumale, that Henry IV was wounded : he had the generosity afterwards to place among his guards the soldier who had wounded him.

The reader will perceive that it is impossible to speak of all the battles of Henry the Great, in a poem where unity of action must be observed. This prince was wounded at Aumale ; he saved the life of the Marshal de Biron at Fontaine-Française. These are events which merit a place in the poem ; but they cannot be recorded in the order in which they occurred. The poet must, therefore, be allowed to use some discretion ; otherwise, it is absolutely impossible to make an epic poem founded upon history.

Henry IV was not, then, wounded at Ivry, but he narrowly escaped losing his life : he was, during the action, assailed by three Walloon dragoons, and would have perished, had it not been for the interference of the Marshal d'Aumont and the Duke de la Trimouille. His soldiers believed, for some time, that he was dead, and raised loud cries of joy when they saw him reappear, sword in hand, and all covered with the blood of his enemies.

I must observe that, after the wounding of the king at Aumale, Duplessis-Mornay wrote to him : " Sire, you have played Alexander long enough ; it is now time for you to act Cæsar : it is our business to die for your majesty ; and your glory, I must say that it is your duty, to live for us."

No longer these command, nor those obey.  
Down fall the banners ; routed and o'erthrown,  
And sending forth unmanly cries, they run ;  
Some bend the suppliant knee, submissive join  
Their hands, and to the chain their wrists resign ;  
Some from their swift pursuers barely freed,  
To reach the river use their utmost speed,  
Then madly plunge amid the foaming tide,  
And sinking, find the death they would avoid.  
The stream, encumber'd in its onward course,  
O'erleaps its banks, retreats towards its source.

Mayne, in the tumult of this horrid scene,  
Masters himself ; though grieved, is yet serene :  
He views his cruel loss, and hopes 'gainst hope,  
That Fate will yet a brighter prospect ope.  
D'Aumale, his eye with burning rage suffused,  
His cruel stars and dastard bands accused.  
" All's lost," he cried, " see where the cowards fly—  
Illustrious Mayne ! our task, then, is to die."  
" Die !" said the chief ; " live rather to replace  
Our fortune, and sustain the cause you grace ;  
Live to regain the laurels we have lost,  
Nor now desert us, when we need you most.  
Thou and Bois Dauphin course the wasted plain,  
Glean up the wreck and remnant of our train.  
To Paris, now : within its sturdy wall  
We will in marching gather one and all.  
Cheer up : let glorious hope our comrades share,  
And, like Coligni, triumph in despair."  
He hears : reluctant sobs his passion speak,  
And tears of anguish trickle down his cheek ;  
A slow compliance sullenly he pays,  
And, frowning stern at the command, obeys.

Thus the proud lion, whom the Moor has tamed,  
And from the fierceness of his race reclaim'd,  
Bows down beneath his swarthy master's hand,  
And bends his surly front at his command—  
With lowering aspect stalks behind his lord,  
And grumbles while he crouches at his word.

Meanwhile in flight unhappy Mayne confides,  
And close within the walls his shame he hides ;  
Prone, at great Henry's feet, the vanquish'd wait  
The dreaded words that shall decide their fate ;  
When from the firmament's unfolded space  
Appear'd the manes of the Bourbon race ;  
Then Louis from the golden clouds came down,  
More closely to observe his god-like son,  
And prove if he, triumphant, now can tame  
His soul to mercy, and deserve his fame.  
The trembling captives, gather'd all before  
The monarch, by their looks, his grace implore.  
When thus in clear and all-persuasive tone,  
The suppliant crowd is by the chieftain won :  
"Be free, and use your freedom as you may—  
Free to take arms against me, or obey ;  
On Mayne, or me, let your election rest,  
His be the sceptre who deserves it best ;  
Choose your own portion, your own fate decree—  
Chains from the League, or victory with me."

Astonish'd, that a king with glory crown'd,  
And lord of the subjected plains around,  
E'en in the lap of triumph should forego  
His right of arms, and 'vantage o'er the foe,  
His grateful captives hail him at his feet

Victorious, and rejoice in their defeat.  
No longer hatred rankles in their minds,  
His might subdued them, and his bounty binds ;  
Proudly they mingle with the monarch's train,  
And turn their juster vengeance upon Mayne.

Now Bourbon, merciful and mild, had stay'd  
The carnage, and the soldiers' wrath allay'd ;  
No longer through the ranks he cleaves his way,  
Fierce as the lion bearing on his prey,  
But seems a bounteous deity, inclined  
To quell the tempest, and to cheer mankind.  
Peace o'er his brows had shed a milder grace,  
And smooth'd the warlike aspect of his face ;  
Snatch'd from the jaws of all-devouring strife,  
His captives are as men restored to life ;  
Their dangers he averts, their wants supplies,  
And views and guards them with a parent's eyes.

Now Fame, the messenger of false and true,  
Who, as she flies, grows larger to the view,  
With wing as rapid as the flight of time  
Skims mountains, seas, and fills each distant clime.  
Millions of piercing eyes to her belong,  
As many mouths let loose her restless tongue,  
And round with listening ears her form is hung.  
Where'er she roams, Credulity is there,  
And Doubt, and Hope, and ever-boding Fear.  
With equal speed she bears upon her wings,  
From far, the glory and the shame of kings ;  
And now unfolds them, eager to proclaim  
Great Henry's deeds, and trumpet loud his name.  
From Tagus swift to Po the tidings ran,  
And echo'd through the lofty Vatican.



Joy to the north the spreading sounds convey,  
To Spain, confusion, terror, and dismay.  
Ill-fated Paris! and thou faithless League!  
Ye priests, full-fraught with malice and intrigue!  
How trembled then your temples, and what dread,  
Disastrous, hung o'er every guilty head!  
But see! your great protector now appears,  
See Mayne returning to dispel your fears!  
Though foil'd, not lost, not hopeless though o'erthrown,  
For still rebellious Paris is his own.  
With specious gloss he covers his defeat,  
Calls ruin victory, and flight retreat;  
Confirms the doubtful, and with prudent aim  
Seeks, by concealing, to repair his shame.  
Transient, alas! the joy that art supplies;  
For cruel truth soon scatter'd the disguise,  
The veil of falsehood from their fate withdrew,  
And open'd all its horrors to their view.

"Not thus," cried Discord, doubly now enraged,  
"Shall strength of mine be uselessly engaged;  
'Tis not for this these wretched walls have seen  
Deep streams of blood, and mountain-piles of slain.  
Forsooth, the raging fires have not thus shone  
To light this hateful Bourbon to the throne.  
Henceforth, by weakness be his mind assail'd;  
Weakness may triumph where the sword has fail'd.  
Force is but vain; all other hopes are gone:  
For Henry yields but to himself alone.  
This day shall beauty's charms his bosom warm;  
Subdue his valor, and unnerve his arm."

Thus Discord spoke; and, through the fields of air,  
Drawn by fierce Hatred on her blood-stain'd car,

In murky clouds that hid the new-born day,  
By horrors black attended on her way,  
Repair'd she swiftly to Cytherea's grove,  
Assured of vengeance, and in search of love.

THE HENRIADE.

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CANTO IX.

## THE ARGUMENT.

Description of the temple of Love. Discord implores his power to enervate the courage of Henry IV. The hero is detained some time by Madame d'Istrée, so well known under the name of the fair Gabrielle. Mornay disengages him from his mistress, and the king returns to the army.

## CANTO THE NINTH.

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Fix'd on the borders of Idalia's coast,  
Where sister realms their kindred limits boast,  
An ancient dome<sup>1</sup> superior awe commands,  
Whose strong foundations rose from nature's hands ;  
But labor since has polish'd every part,  
And nature yielded to the toils of art.  
Each circling plain the verdant myrtles crown,  
Unknown to winter's desolating frown.  
Pomona here her fruits profusely pours ;  
Here Flora sheds her variegated flowers.  
Here, while spontaneous harvests fill the plains,  
No season changes, and no wretch complains.  
Here peace unfading soothes the sons of earth,  
Such peace as reign'd at Nature's earlier birth.  
With hand of soft indulgence she displays  
Celestial quiet, and serenest days.  
Here every lawn in plenty's robe is dress'd,  
With every sweet but innocency bless'd.  
From side to side the streams of music roll,

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<sup>1</sup> This description of the temple of Love, and the picture of this passion personified, are entirely allegorical. The scene is laid in Cyprus, as the abode of Politics is made at Rome, because the people of this island have always been represented as devout worshippers of Love, just as Rome has ever been looked upon as the most politic court of Europe.

Love must not be regarded as the son of Venus, and as a fabulous deity, but as a passion represented with all the pleasures and all the disorders which accompany it.

Whose soothing softness fascinates the soul.  
In plaintive sonnets burns the lover's flame,  
Who boasts his weakness, and exults in shame.  
Each day, encircled with the fragrant store,  
The little godhead's smiles their prayers implore ;  
Eager they press to learn the poisonous art  
At once to pleasure, and entrance the heart.  
Delusive Hope, whose charms serenely shine,  
Conducts the train to love's enchanting shrine ;  
The beauteous Graces, half unveil'd, advance,  
Indulge the song, and join the decent dance.  
Voluptuous Pleasure on the velvet plain,  
In calm tranquillity attends the strain.  
Lo ! by her side the heart-enchanting Sighs,  
Fix'd Silence strongly speaking to the eyes ;  
The amorous Transports, and the soft Desires,  
Which fan the bosom to the fiercest fires.

Thus smiles the alluring entrance of the dome ;  
When far within the daring footsteps roam,  
What scenes of horror round the altar roll,  
And shake the libertine's presuming soul !  
No sounds harmonious feast the ravish'd ears,  
No more the lovely train of Joys appears.  
Conscious Imprudence, Murmurs, Fears, and Hate  
With darkness blast the splendors of the State.  
Stern Jealousy, whose faltering step obeys  
Each fell suspicion that her bliss betrays ;  
Ungovern'd Rage, with sharpest venom stored,  
Rears in the van his unrelenting sword.  
These Malice joins, who, with perfidious face,  
Smiles at the triumphs of the savage race.  
Pensive Repentance, shuddering in the rear,  
Heaves the deep groan, and showers the plenteous tear.



Full in the centre of this horrid court,  
Where Pleasure's fell companions all resort,  
Love waves forever his fantastic rod,  
At once a cruel, and a tender god.  
His infant power the fates of mortals bears,  
With wanton smiles dispensing peace, and wars.  
Smooth flows Deceit's insinuating art,  
Which lifts the captive's animated heart.  
He counts his triumphs from the splendid throne,  
While prostrate sons of pride the conqueror own.  
Careless of good, he plies his savage skill,  
And dwells applauding on each deed of ill.

Now Discord opens through the ranks of joy,  
Her vengeful passage to the kindred boy.  
Fierce in her hand the brandish'd torches glow,  
Her eye-balls flash, and blood distains her brow.  
"Where, then," she cries, "thy formidable darts!  
Recline they, pointed for more stubborn hearts?  
If e'er my venom, mingled with thy fire,  
Has fann'd the flame, and raised the passion higher;  
If oft for thee I trouble nature's laws,  
Rise, fly to vengeance of my injured cause.  
Crush'd by a victor king my snakes are laid,  
Who joins the olive to the laurel's shade.  
Amid the tumults of a civil war,  
Meek-stepping Clemency attends his car;  
Fix'd to the standards, waving in the wind,  
She soothes in Discord's spite the rebel mind.  
One victory gain'd, my throne, my empire falls,  
Lo! Henry showers his rage on Paris' walls.  
He flies to fight, to conquer, and forgive;  
Fast bound in brazen chains must Discord live.  
'Tis thine to check the torrent of his course,

And drop soft poison on his valor's source.  
Yes, bend the victim to thy conquering dart,  
And quell each virtue of his stubborn heart.  
Of old (and well thou knowest), thy sovereign care  
Bow'd great Alcides to the imperial fair.  
By thee, proud Anthony's enervate mind  
For Cleopatra's form each thought resign'd ;  
In flight inglorious o'er the ocean hurl'd,  
For her he quits the empire of the world.  
Henry alone resists thy dread command ;  
Go, blast the laurels in his daring hand.  
His brows entwine with myrtle's amorous charms,  
And sink the slumbering warrior in thy arms.  
Fly to support ; he shakes my tottering throne :  
Go, shield an empire, and a cause, thine own."

The monster spoke ; the trembling roof around  
Returns the horrors of the dreadful sound.  
Stretch'd on his flowery couch, the listening god  
With artful smiles consented at her nod ;  
Arm'd with his golden deaths, resolved, he flies  
Along the bright dominion of the skies.  
With Pleasures, Sports, and Graces in his train,  
The Zephyrs bear him to the Gallic plain.

Straight he discovers, with malicious joy,  
The feeble Simois, and the fields of Troy ;  
And laughs, reflecting, in those seats renown'd.  
O'er many a palace mouldering on the ground.  
Venice from far, fair city ! strikes his sight,  
The prodigy of earth, and art's delight ;  
Which towers supreme, as ocean's godhead gave  
Her powerful empire o'er the encircling wave.  
Sicilia's plain his rapid flight retards,

Where his own genius nursed the pastoral bards;  
Where, Fame reports, through secret paths he led,  
The wandering waves from amorous Alpheus' bed.  
Now quitting Arethusa's lovely shore,  
Swift to Vaclusia's<sup>1</sup> seats his course he bore :  
Asylum soft ; in life's serener days,  
Where lovesick Petrarch sigh'd his pensive lays.  
From thence his eyes survey the favorite strand  
Where Anet's walls uprose at his command :  
Where Art's rich toils superior reverence claim,  
And still beams forth Diana's<sup>2</sup> cipher'd name.  
There on her tomb the Joys and Graces shower,  
In grateful memory, each fragrant flower.

Now to the wanderer Ivry's fatal plain appears :  
The monarch, ready for severer cares,  
There first with softer pleasures soothes his breast,  
And lulls his thunders to a transient rest.  
Around his side the warrior youth display'd,  
Pursue the labors of the sylvan shade.  
The godhead triumphs in his future pain,  
Sharpens his arrows, and prepares his chain ;  
The winds, which erst he smooth'd, his nod alarms,  
He speaks, and sets the elements in arms.  
From every side he calls the furious storms ;  
A weight of clouds the face of heaven deforms.  
The impetuous torrent rushes from the sky ;  
The thunder rolls, the livid lightnings fly ;

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<sup>1</sup> Vaclusia, *Vallis Clausa*, near Gordes in Provence, celebrated for the sojourn made by Petrarch in its vicinity. A house is even now pointed out here as the dwelling of Petrarch.

<sup>2</sup> Anet was built by Henry II for Diana de Poitiers, whose ciphers are mingled with all the ornaments of this castle, which is not very far from the plain of Ivry.

Each boisterous brother at his mandate springs,  
And earth lies shadow'd with their murky wings.  
Bright Phœbus sinks with night's incumbent load,  
And conscious nature shudders at the god.

O'er the dark plains, through miry, dubious ways,  
Alone and comfortless, the monarch strays :  
When watchful Love displays the torch's light,  
Whose twinkling radiance strikes upon his sight ;  
The hostile star, with fatal joy betray'd,  
He swiftly follows through the dreary shade.  
Such fatal joy deluded wanderers show,  
Led by the vapor's transitory glow ;  
The guide, malignant, through the midnight gloom  
Quits not the wretch, but leads him to his doom.  
Now in the horrors of this lone retreat,  
Roam'd a fair virgin's solitary feet.  
Silent, the centre of the fort within,  
She waits her father from the battle's din ;  
Loyal in council, veteran in the plain,  
Who shone the foremost of his sovereign's train :  
D'Estrée<sup>1</sup> her name, and nature's guardian care  
Had shower'd her treasures to adorn the fair  
Beauty less fair the Grecian maid possess'd,  
Whose guilt betray'd her Menelaus' rest.  
With charms inferior Cleopatra glow'd,

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<sup>1</sup> Gabrielle d'Estrées, of an ancient family in Picardy, daughter and grand-daughter of a grand-master of ordnance ; espoused to the Seigneur de Liancourt, and afterwards Duchess of Beaufort. Henry IV became violently in love with her during the civil wars. He often stole away to see her. One day he even disguised himself as a peasant, passed through the midst of the enemy's guards, and arrived at her house, not without some danger of being taken.

These details may be read in the *History of the Loves of the Great Alcandre*, written by a princess of Conti.

Whose eyes the lord<sup>1</sup> of Italy subdued,  
While to the shore the enamor'd Cydnians move,  
And incense shed, as to the queen of love.

The nymph was now at that unsteady age,  
When headstrong passions all the mind engage.  
No lovers yet their sighing vows impart,  
Though form'd for love, yet generous was her heart.  
Thus the fair beauties of the blushing rose,  
Coy, in the spring, to wanton zephyr close ;  
But the full lustre of their stores display  
To the kind influence of a summer's day.

Cupid, preparing to ensnare the maid,  
Appears, but not in wonted garb array'd.  
No dart, no torch, his little hands employ,  
In voice and figure an unmeaning boy.  
"From yonder stream to this enchanting dome,  
The hapless Mayne's tremendous conqueror's come."  
Full through her soul the soft infection ran ;  
She pants to captivate the godlike man.  
A livelier bloom her graceful features prove,  
Which crowns the triumphs of applauding love.  
What could he doubt ? with charms celestial spread,  
The attractive virgin to the king he led.  
With double glow each ornament of art,

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<sup>1</sup> Cleopatra, going to Tarsus, where Antony had sent for her, performed the voyage in a vessel glittering with gold, and ornamented with the most beautiful paintings ; the sails were of purple, the cordage of gold and silk. Cleopatra was dressed in the costume in which the goddess Venus was then represented ; her women acted the part of nymphs and graces ; the poop and prow were filled with children disguised as Cupids. They advanced in this manner upon the river Cydnus, at the sound of a thousand musical instruments. All the people of Tarsus took her for a goddess. Every one left the tribunal of Antony to go to meet her. Antony himself went out to receive her, and became madly enamored of her.—*Plutarch*.



In nature's guise, enslaves the enamor'd heart.  
Her golden tresses floating in the air,  
Now kiss the rising bosom of the fair ;  
Now start to view the heavenly sweets display'd,  
By native innocence more lovely made.  
No stern, no gloomy lower, which puts to flight  
Each thought of love, of beauty, and delight ;  
But the mild softness of a decent shame,  
The cheek just tipping with the purest flame ;  
Commanding reverence, which excites desires,  
And sheds, when conquer'd, love's increasing fires.

Now the arch-god, with each enchanting grace,  
Diffused resistless beauties o'er the place.  
The plenteous myrtle, with spontaneous birth,  
Springs from the bosom of the liberal earth.  
Its amorous foliage decorates the glade,  
And woos the thoughtless to its fatal shade,  
Till bands unseen the entangled step betray ;  
Fear bids depart, but pleasure wins their stay.

Soft through the shade a soothing Lethe rolls,  
Where happy lovers with inebriate souls  
Quaff long oblivion to departed fame ;  
So unresisted love's all-conquering flame !  
How changed the scene ! here every bosom glows ;  
Pour'd from each sweet the entrancing venom flows.  
Love sounds throughout ; around, the feather'd choir  
Indulge the song, and burn with mutual fire.  
The hind arising ere the dawn of day,  
To Ceres' golden treasures bends his way ;  
Now stops, aghast, now heaves the plaintive sighs,  
And feels the new-born passion with surprise.  
No more his soul the toils of harvest move ;



He dwells delighted on the scenes of love :  
While heedless of her flock the maiden stands,  
And drops the spindle from her faltering hands.  
Could fair d'Estrée resist the magic charm ?  
What power can guard 'gainst love's prevailing arm !  
Superior foes her virgin bosom load :  
At once her youth, a hero, and a god.  
Meanwhile the king, with dauntless soul, prepares  
In thought to mingle with the battle's cares.  
Some subtle demon plies his secret art,  
And free-born virtue, sighing, quits the heart.  
To softer scenes his amorous soul betray'd,  
Sees, hears, and loves alone the heavenly maid.  
But now the chieftains of the embattled band  
With ardent vows their absent king demand ;  
They shudder'd for his life, but little knew  
Their fears were only to his glory due :  
Immersed in grief, the soldier's conquering pride  
Sinks to despair, no Henry for their guide.  
Thy guardian power, O France, no longer stays  
To grant continuance of the soft delays :  
At Louis' nod, descending from the skies,  
Swift to the succor of his son he flies.  
Alighting now o'er earth's extended round,  
He seeks a mind for wisdom's stores renown'd—  
Not where pale, hungry, speechless students claim,  
Fix'd in a midnight gloom, her sacred name,  
But in fair Ivry, midst the din of arms,  
Where the flush'd warriors glow with conquest's charms.  
At length the genius stays his ardent flight,  
Where Calvin's floating banners spread to sight.  
There Mornay he address'd ; when reason leads,  
Her solid influence consecrates our deeds.  
As o'er the heathen world she pour'd her ray,

Whose virtues Christians blushing might survey,  
Reason Aurelius' sentiments refined,  
And shower'd ideas over Plato's mind.

Severe but friendly Mornay knew the art,  
At once to mend and captivate the heart.  
His deeds more reverence than his doctrines move,  
Each virtue met his fond, parental love.  
Full steel'd to pleasure, covetous of toils,  
He look'd on dangers with undaunted smiles.  
No poisonous frauds of palaces control  
His nobly-stubborn purity of soul.  
Thus Arethusa's genial waters flow  
Soft to the bosom of the deep below—  
A crystal pure, unconscious of a stain,  
Spite of the billows of the foaming main.

The generous Mornay, by the goddess led,  
Hastes to the seat, where rapturous pleasure shed  
Her soothing opiate on the victor's breast,  
And lull'd awhile the fates of France to rest.  
Triumphant love each lavish charm employs,  
To blast his glory with redoubled joys.  
A waste of transports fills the round of day,  
Transports which fly too swiftly to decay.  
To vengeance fired, the little god descried  
Mornay, with heaven-born wisdom for his guide.  
Full at the warrior-chief he points his dart,  
To lull his senses, and enthrall his heart.  
Thick fall the blunted shafts; Mornay awaits  
The king's return, and eyes the accursed retreats.

Fast by the stream, mid nature's rich perfume,  
Sacred to silent ease, where myrtles bloom,  
D'Estrée on Henry lavish'd all her charms,

Melting he glow'd, and languish'd in her arms.  
No cooling change their blissful moments know,  
Soft from their eyes the tears of rapture flow ;  
Tears, which redouble every fond delight,  
And heavenly feelings of the soul excite ;  
Flush'd with the full-blown rage of keen desires,  
Which love alone can paint, for love alone inspires.

The wanton Loves unfold the hero's vest,  
While smiling Pleasures fan his soul to rest.  
One holds the cuirass reeking from the plain,  
One grasps the sword, yet never worn in vain ;  
And laughs, while poisoning in his hand he shows  
The bulwark of the throne, and terror of its foes.

From Discord's voice the strains of insult roll,  
Each cruel transport brooding in her soul,  
With active fury at the favoring hour  
To rouse the serpent of confederate power.  
While Henry riots in the soft repose,  
She wakes to vengeance his relentless foes.  
Now in the fragrant gardens of delight  
Mornay appears : he blushes at the sight ;  
Their startled bosoms mutual fears engage,  
And a dead silence chains the approaching sage.  
But looks, in silence bow'd to earth, impart  
A powerful language to the sovereign's heart ;  
And sadness, lowering in the clouded face,  
Proclaims at once his weakness and disgrace.  
Ill had another taken Mornay's care,  
Love from the guilty, few accusers share.  
"Fear not," he cries, "our anger ; rest at ease ;  
Who points my error cannot fail to please :  
Worthy of thee our bosom shall remain ;

'Tis well : and Henry is himself again.  
Love now resigns that virtue he betray'd :  
Fly, let us quit this soft, inglorious shade.  
Yes, quit the scenes, where my rebellious flame  
Would fondling still the silken fetters frame.  
Self-conquest surely boasts the noblest charms,  
We'll brave the power of love in glory's arms ;  
Scatter destruction o'er the extended shore,  
And sheathe our error in the Spaniard's gore."  
These generous words the sage's soul inspire :  
" Yes, now my sovereign beams with native fire.  
Each rebel passion feels thy conquering reins,  
O great protector of thy country's plains !  
Love adds fresh lustre to the blaze of fame,  
For triumphs there superior greatness claim."  
He said ; the monarch hastens to depart,  
But, oh ! what sorrows load his amorous heart !  
Still, as he flies, he cannot but adore ;  
His tears he censures, yet he weeps the more.  
Forced by the sage, attracted by the fair,  
He flies, returns, and quits her in despair.  
D'Estrée, unable to sustain the strife,  
Falls prostrate, 'reft of color, as of life.  
A sudden night invades her beauteous eyes ;  
Love, who perceived it, sent forth dreadful cries.  
Pierced to the soul, lest death's eternal shade  
Should rob his empire of the lovely maid ;  
Should spoil the lustre of so fair a frame,  
Destined through France to spread the genial flame.  
Wrapt in his arms, again her eyelids move,  
And gently open to the voice of love.  
The king she names, the king demands in vain,  
Now looks, now closes her bright eyes again.  
Love, bathed in sorrow for the suffering fair,



Recall'd her sinking spirit by his prayer ;  
 With flattering hopes her solaced soul betray'd,  
 And soothed those evils, which himself had made.

Mornay, of steady and relentless mind,  
 Led on the monarch still but half resign'd.  
 Firm force and godlike virtue point the way,  
 While glory's hands the laurel wreath display ;  
 And love, indignant at the victor's fame,  
 Flies far from Anet to conceal his shame.





# THE HENRIADE.

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## CANTO X.

## THE ARGUMENT.

The king returns to the army. Renews the siege. The duel betwixt Turenne and D'Aumale. A famine in the city. The king relieves the inhabitants. Heaven at length recompenses his virtues. Truth descends to enlighten him. Paris opens her gates, and the war is finished.

## CANTO THE TENTH.

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THOSE fatal moments lost in soft repose  
Had waked the courage of the vanquish'd foes.  
Rebellion breathed again, and faction's schemes  
Flush'd the deluded throng with golden dreams.  
Yet vain their hopes, for, smit with generous fame  
And active zeal, the martial Bourbon came,  
Eager to reap the harvest he had sown,  
And make the field of conquest all his own.  
Again his banners waved aloft in air,  
And Paris saw them with renew'd despair.  
Again the chief before her walls appears,  
Searce yet recover'd from a siege's fears ;  
Those very walls, where yet sulphureous smoke  
With desolation marks the cannon's stroke,  
Which now with ruins had bestrew'd the land,  
Had not compassion check'd the hero's hand ;  
When the bright angel, who obedient still,  
Guardian of France, performs the Almighty's will,  
Bade his soft breast with tender mercies glow,  
Withheld his arm, and stopped the falling blow.  
Through the king's camp no voice was heard around  
But songs of mirth, and joy's tumultuous sound.  
While each brave warrior, anxious for the fray,  
With eyes impatient marks the destined prey.  
Meantime the haughty legions all dismay'd,  
Press'd round their prudent chief, and sued for aid ;

When thus Aumale, of brave, impetuous soul,  
Abhorring counsel, and above control :  
“ We have not yet so learn’d our warfare here  
To sneak to hiding-holes, and crouch for fear ;  
Cursed be the man whose counsel thither tends !  
The foe comes forward—let us meet them, friends ;  
Not tamely wait till other ’vantage calls,  
And rust in sloth beneath these coward walls.  
On, then, and conquer—fortune oft will spare  
A smile to crown the efforts of despair.  
Frenchmen attack’d, already are o’erthrown—  
Seek then your safety from yourselves alone.  
Ye chiefs, who hear me, haste where glory calls—  
Know, soldiers, know, your leaders are your walls.”

He spoke—amazed the Leaguers heard each sound,  
And turn’d their eyes in silence to the ground.  
He blush’d with shame, and in each leader’s face  
Read their refusal, and his own disgrace.  
“ Ye will not follow, then, ye heroes tame,  
Nor wish I basely to survive the shame ;  
Well—shrink at dangers still—so shall not I—  
Alone I go—to conquer or to die.”

He said ; and from the city gate in martial pride  
Boldly advanced with firm, impetuous stride.  
Before his steps the shrill-tongued herald went,  
To hurl defiance at each warrior’s tent.  
E’en to the king’s abode the marshal came,  
And challenged combat in the hero’s name.  
“ Ye daring sons of glory,” loud he cried,  
“ Now be your valor with your fortune tried :  
Aumale in single combat waits you here,  
By me he calls to arms ;—stand forth, appear.”

The valiant chiefs the desperate challenge heard,  
Their zeal rekindling at each haughty word ;  
Each warrior stern, impatient for the fray,  
Hoped the king's voice, and hail'd the glorious day.  
Courage in all had form'd an equal right ;  
Turenne alone found favor in his sight.

"Go," said the prince, "chastise the daring foe,  
France to thy hands shall all her glory owe ;  
Remember, soldier, 'tis a glorious cause,  
Thy own, thy king's, thy country and thy laws :  
I'll arm thee for the fight," the monarch said,  
And from his girdle loosed the shining blade.  
When thus Turenne—"By this good sword I swear,  
By thee, my king, each subject's darling care,  
Thus nobly honor'd in my prince's voice,  
My ready zeal shall never shame thy choice."

He spoke. While manly valor flush'd his face,  
He sprang to meet the monarch's warm embrace ;  
Then to the field, impetuous as a flood,  
Rush'd where Aumale the haughty champion stood.

To Paris' walls ran all the Leaguer-bands,  
While round their king his faithful army stands.  
With steadfast eye, which anxious care reveal'd,  
Each side beheld its champion take the field.  
While voice and gesture on each part unite  
To warm its hero for the dreadful fight.

Meantime, o'er Paris, gather'd fast a cloud,  
Pregnant with torrents whelming, thundering loud,  
While from its fearful womb, with purpose fell,  
Burst forth in flames the monstrous brood of hell.

There was hot Zeal, which, frantic, leaps all bounds,  
And Discord smiling on her thousand wounds ;  
There artful Policy, designing, sly,  
With heart of falsehood and with scowling eye ;  
There the mad demon, too, of battles stood ;  
All Leaguer-gods, and drunk with human blood.  
Descending now, they land on Paris' wall,  
To lend their aid in favor of Aumale.

When lo ! an angel from the azure sky,  
The faithful servant of the God on high,  
Descended—round his head in splendor play  
Beams, that eclipse the lustre of the day.  
On wings of fire he shaped his cheerful flight,  
And mark'd his passage with a train of light.  
A fruitful olive-branch one hand sustain'd,  
Presage of happy days and peace regain'd.  
His other hand upheld a flaming sword,  
And shook the terrors of the eternal Lord ;  
That sword, with which the avenging angel arm'd,  
Smote the first-born. Confounded and disarm'd,  
Aghast, at once, shrunk all the fiends of hell,  
While to the ground their pointless weapons fell.  
And resolution sicken'd, all o'erthrown  
By some resistless force from hands unknown.  
So Dagon, worshipp'd on Philistia's shore,  
Whose purple altars ran with human gore,  
Before the ark in hopeless ruin nods,  
And falling, owns the Almighty God of gods.

Paris, the king, the army, heaven and hell  
The combat witness ;—at the trumpet's swell  
On to the field the ready warriors came,  
Conscious of valor, thirsting, too, for fame.



Their hands, unused the cumbrous weight to wield,  
Disdain'd to fight beneath the glittering shield—  
The specious armor of inglorious knight,  
Proof 'gainst all blows, and dazzling to the sight;  
They scorn'd the equipment of such coward dress,  
Which, lengthening combat, made all danger less.  
In courage firm advanced each haughty lord,  
Man against man, and sword opposed to sword.  
“O God of kings,” the royal champion cried,  
“Judge thou my cause, and battle on my side;  
Courage I vaunt not of, an idle name,  
When heavenly justice bars the warrior's claim;  
Not from myself I dare the glorious fight,  
My God shall arm me, who approves my right.”

To whom Aumale: “In deeds of valor known,  
Be my reliance on this arm alone.  
Our fate depends on us, the mind afraid  
Prays to its God in vain for needful aid.  
Calm in the heavens he views our equal fight,  
And smiling conquest proves the hero's right.  
Valor's the god of war,” he sternly cried,  
And with an aspect of contemptuous pride  
Gazed on his rival, whose superior mind  
Spoke in his face, courageous and resign'd.

Now sounds the trumpet; to the dubious fray  
Rush the brave chiefs, impatient of delay.  
Whate'er of skill, whate'er of strength is known,  
By turns, each daring champion proves his own.  
While all the troops watch anxiously the sight,  
Half pleased, half frightened by the desperate fight.  
Swiftly each foeman now his falchion plays,  
And from each blade the trembling lightnings blaze—

As when the sunlight o'er some rippling stream  
Dissolves, and flits in ether, beam by beam.  
With nervous strength and fury uncontrol'd,  
Full of himself, and as a lion bold,  
Seems stern Aumale; the while his rival brave,  
Nor proud of strength, nor passion's headlong slave,  
Collected in himself, awaits his foe,  
Smiles at his rage, and wards each furious blow.  
In vain Aumale his boasted power tries,  
His arm no more its wonted strength supplies,—  
While cool Turenne the combat's rage renews,  
Attacks with vigor, and with skill pursues,  
Till proud Aumale sinks baffled to the ground,  
His hot blood pouring from a ghastly wound.  
Now Discord shrieks; hell, echoing her despair,  
With doleful accents fills the noonday air:  
The Leaguer's throne is prostrate in the dust—  
Thou conquerest, Bourbon! All our hope is lost.  
The wretched people, with lamenting cries,  
Attest their grief, and rend the vaulted skies;  
Aumale, all weak, and stretch'd upon the sand,  
His falchion, useless, fallen from his hand;  
Fainting, yet strives fresh vigor to regain,  
And seems to threaten still, though all in vain.  
He tries to speak, but not a word accents,  
While shame the fury of his look augments.  
He heaves, he sinks, he opes his sightless eyes,  
Turns them towards Paris, and, in sighing, dies.  
Thou, Mayne, wert witness of his latest breath,  
Thou tremblest when thy champion lay in death;  
Then was presaged thy fast approaching fall,  
And thou wast more than conquer'd by Aumale.

The Leaguers, now, to Paris' gates repair;

Aumale,<sup>1</sup> upon their shoulders, slowly bear.  
O'ercome with woe, in silence and amaze,  
Upon his bleeding corse ten thousands gaze ;  
That forehead gash'd, those cheeks with gore bespread,  
That open mouth, that ill-supported head,  
Those rayless eyes, now fix'd in horrid stare,  
Excite their pity, and their bosoms tear ;  
And yet no cry is heard, no tear is shed,  
Shame, sorrow, terror still them as the dead.  
But hark ! That stillness breaks ! A sudden sound  
Replete with horror fills the welkin round.  
The bold assailants, with tumultuous cries,  
Seek the assault, and hope the long-sought prize.  
But Blanche's son, in heaven the watchful ward  
Of France's realm and France's rightful Lord,  
Calm'd the rash ardor of his scion's mind ;—  
As holds midway in air the stormy wind,  
He who unseen the elements enslaves,  
And sets the limit to the surging waves ;  
Who cities founds, or bids them prone decline ;  
Who holds man's wavering heart in hand divine.  
Then Henry, whom these milder thoughts engage,  
Their transports calms, and seeks to lull their rage.  
Stubborn, howe'er, and adverse to his will,  
Howe'er ungrateful, 'twas his country still ;  
Hated by subjects whom he wish'd to save,  
The mercies they denied his virtue gave ;  
Pleased if his bounty could their crimes efface,

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<sup>1</sup> The Chevalier d'Aumale was killed, about this time, at Saint-Denis, and his death greatly enfeebled the party of the League. His duel with the Viscount de Turenne is only a fiction ; but these combats were then very common. A very celebrated one took place between the Sieur de Marivaux, a royalist, and the Sieur Claude de Marolles, a Leaguer. They fought in presence of the people and the army, upon the very day when Henry III was assassinated. Marolles was victorious.

And force the wretched to accept of grace.  
All desperate means he shudder'd to employ ;  
He sought to conquer Paris,<sup>1</sup> not destroy.  
Famine, perhaps, and lengthen'd scenes of woe,  
Might bend to law a proud, mistaken foe :  
Brought up in plenty, with abundance fed,  
To ease and all the train of pleasures bred,  
His people, press'd by want's impulsive sting,  
Might seek for mercy from their patriot king.

Rebellion's sons, whom vengeance fain would spare,  
Mistook for weakness Henry's pious care.  
His valor all forgot ; in stubborn pride,  
They braved their master, and the king defied.

But when no more along the captive Seine,  
The freighted vessels bear the golden grain—  
When desperate Famine with her meagre train,  
With Death, her consort, spreads her baneful reign,  
In vain the wretch sends forth his piteous cries,  
Looks up in vain for food, and, gasping, dies.  
The rich no more preserve their wasting health,  
But pine with hunger in the midst of wealth.  
No sound of joy the afflicted city knows,  
No sound but such as witness'd direful woes.  
No more, their heads with festive chaplets crown'd,  
In songs of joy they send the goblet round.  
No wines provoke excess, no savory meats  
Excite the appetite. Through the lone streets,  
Now thin and pale, and wearing Death's dull stare,  
They wander, victims of the fiend Despair.  
The weak old man, through famine well-nigh dead,

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<sup>1</sup> Henry IV besieged Paris in 1590 with less than twenty thousand men.

Watches beside his starving infant's bed ;  
 Here, a whole family dies for want of food—  
 There, haggard wretches o'er their miseries brood,  
 And, madmen-like, in life's extremest stage  
 Fight o'er their offal with relentless rage.  
 The living even prey upon the dead,  
 And of their powder'd bones knead poison'd bread.<sup>1</sup>

Meantime the priests, those reverend sons of prayer,  
 Who in the people's misery never share,  
 In plenty batten, deaf to hunger's cries,  
 Nor from their stores distribute wish'd supplies.<sup>2</sup>  
 Yet went they forth, with true fanatic zeal,  
 To preach those virtues which they could not feel.  
 To the poor wretch, death hanging on his eyes,  
 Their liberal hand would ope the friendly skies ;  
 To some they talk'd of vengeance sent from God,  
 And Henry punish'd with the Almighty's rod ;  
 Of Paris, saved by heaven's immediate love,  
 And manna dropping from the clouds above.  
 O'eraw'd by power, by artful priests deceived,  
 The crowd, obsequious, what they taught believed ;  
 Submissive, half content, resign'd their breath,  
 Nay, happy too, they triumph'd in their death.

With foreign troops, to swell affliction's tide,  
 The famish'd city swarm'd on every side ;

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<sup>1</sup> It was the Spanish ambassador to the League who advised the making of bread of the bones of the dead, an advice which was followed, and which only served to hasten the end of many thousands of men. It is an instance of the strange weakness of the imagination, that these besieged people could not eat the flesh of their dead compatriots, but could willingly grind and swallow their bones.

<sup>2</sup> Mézeray says that the ecclesiastical lodges and convents, even that of the Capuchins, were stored with sufficient provisions to last more than a year.



Their breasts, where pity never learn'd to glow,  
Lusted for rapine, and rejoiced in woe.  
These came from haughty Belgia's plains, and those  
Helvetia's monsters,<sup>1</sup> hireling friends or foes.  
To mercy deaf, on misery's sons they press,  
And snatch the little from extreme distress.  
Not for the soldier's plunder, hidden store,  
And heap'd-up riches, useful now no more ;  
Not urged by lust and lured by beauty's charms,  
To force the virgin from her mother's arms ;  
By hunger, now, to fiendish deeds they're led,  
And murder deem as honest toil for bread.

A woman—God ! must faithful memory<sup>2</sup> tell  
A deed, which bears the horrid stamp of hell !  
Their flinty hearts, which never felt remorse,  
Robb'd of her little all with brutal force.  
One tender infant left, her late fond care,  
The frantic mother eyed with fell despair ;  
Then furious, all at once, with murderous blade  
Rush'd where the dear devoted child was laid ;  
The smiling babe stretch'd forth its little arms ;  
Its helpless age, sweet looks, and guileless charms,  
Spoke daggers to her, while her bosom burns  
With maddening rage, remorse, and love by turns.  
Fain would she backward turn, and strives to shun  
The wretched deed, which famine wishes done.

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<sup>1</sup> The Swiss who were in Paris, in the pay of the Duke de Mayenne, committed frightful excesses, according to the accounts of all the historians of the time ; the word *monsters* should be applied to them and not to their nation, full of good sense and uprightness, and one of the most respectable nations in the world, as it seeks constantly to preserve its own liberty without diminishing that of others.

<sup>2</sup> This story is related in all the memoirs of the times. Similar horrors were witnessed at the siege of the city of Sancerre.



Thrice did she rear the sword, and, all dismay'd,  
Thrice did she trembling drop the bloodless blade;  
Till furious grown, in hollow voice she cries:  
"Cursed be the fruitful bed and nuptial ties!  
And thou, unhappy offspring of my womb,  
Brought into being to receive thy doom—  
Didst thou accept this idol boon of life  
To die by famine, or these tyrants' strife?  
Shouldst thou escape their unrelenting rage,  
Will pinching hunger spare thy softer age?  
Then wherefore shouldst thou live, to weep in vain,  
A wretched wanderer o'er thy parent slain?  
No, die with me, ere keen reflection knows  
With bitter anguish to augment thy woes.  
Give me—thou shalt, nor wait the formal grave—  
Give back the blood thy helpless mother gave;  
I will entomb thee, and the world shall see  
A desperate crime, unheard of yet, in me."  
She said, and frantic with extreme despair,  
Plunged the keen poniard in her darling heir.

Hither, by hunger drawn, the ruffians sped,  
While yet the mother on her infant fed.  
Their eyes with eager joy the place survey,  
Like savage tigers gloating on their prey.  
With furious wish they scan the mansion o'er,  
Then rush in rage, and burst the jarring door.

When, dreadful sight! a form with horror wild,  
That seem'd a woman o'er a murder'd child,  
Set all aghast: lo! in its reeking blood  
She bathed her hands, and sought a present food.  
"Yes," cried the wretch, "the bloody deed is done;  
Look there, inhuman monsters—'tis my son.

These hands had never worn this purple hue,  
Nor this dear offspring perish'd, but for you.  
Now, ruffians, now with happy transport strike,  
Feed on the mother and the babe alike.  
Why heave your breasts with such unusual awe?  
Have I alone offended nature's law?  
Why stare you all on me? such horrid food  
Befits you best, ye lustful sons of blood."

Wildly she speaks, and, with a look more wild,  
Drives home the sword, and dies upon her child.  
The speech, the look, the deed, with terror strike  
The monsters, who, all grim and spectre-like,  
Glare on the scene, and stealthily retire,  
Dreading upon their heads God's vengeful fire.  
Soon through the city spreads the horrid tale;  
The people groan, the leaders' hearts now fail,  
And ere long reaching e'en the tented field,  
Bursts the proud monarch's fount of tears long seal'd.

"O God," he cried, "to whom my thoughts are bare,  
Who knowest all I can, and all I dare,  
To thee I lift these hands, unstain'd with blood—  
Thou knowest I war not 'gainst my country's good.  
To me impute not nor their crimes nor woes,  
Let Mayenne say from whence the ruin flows.  
For all these ills, let him advance the plea  
Which tyrants only use, necessity;  
To be thy country's foe, Mayenne, be thine—  
To be its father, be that duty mine.  
I am their father, and would wish to spare  
Rebellious children with a father's care.  
Should my compassion, then, but madly arm  
A desperate rebel to extend his harm?

Or must I lose my regal crown to show  
Indulgent mercy on a subject foe?  
Yes—let him live; and if such mercy cost  
So dear a price as all my kingdom lost,  
Let this memorial dignify my grave—  
To rule o'er foes I sought not, but to save.”

He said,<sup>1</sup> and bade the storms of vengeance cease,  
And hush'd the tumults with returning peace.  
Paris again her cheerful accents heard,  
And willing troops obey'd their Henry's word.  
Now on the walls the throng impetuous swarms;  
And all around, pale, trembling, wasted forms  
Stalk like the ghosts, which from the shades of night,  
Compell'd by magic force, revisit light,  
When potent magi, with enchantments fell,  
Invoke the powers below and startle hell.  
What admiration swell'd each happy breast  
To find a guardian in their foe profess'd!  
By their own chiefs deserted and betray'd,  
An adverse army lent a willing aid.  
These pikes, which late dealt slaughter all around  
With desperate force, no longer rear'd to wound,  
Now kindly raised to second Henry's care,  
On their stain'd points the cheering nurture bear.  
“Are these,” said they, “the monsters of mankind?  
Are these the workings of a tyrant mind?  
This the proud king, sad outcast of his God,  
His passions' easy slave, and people's rod?”

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<sup>1</sup> Henry IV was so good as to permit his officers (according to Mézeray) to send refreshments to their old friends and to the ladies. The soldiers followed the example of the officers. The king, moreover, had the generosity to permit all those to leave the city who desired to do so. Thus it was that the besiegers nourished the besieged.

No, 'tis the image of that Power above,  
Who acts with justice, and delights in love ;  
He triumphs, yet forgives, nor seeks to show  
Revenge's malice on a conquer'd foe.  
Nay, more, he comforts, and with royal grace  
Extends assistance to a rebel race.  
Be discord banish'd from this glorious hour,  
And our blood flow but to cement his power ;  
And steady zeal, no longer faction's slave,  
For him employ that life he wished to save."

Such was the language Paris' sons express'd,  
While soft emotions fill'd each grateful breast.  
But who, alas ! can strong assurance ground  
On sickly friendship, which exhales in sound ?  
What hopes from such a race so light and vain,  
Who only idly rise to fall again ?  
For now the priests, whose cursed, designing arts,  
Had raised the flames of discord in their hearts,  
Flock'd round the people : " O ye sons of shame,  
Cowards in war, and Christians but in name,  
Is't thus your weakness from your God would fly ?  
Think on the martyrs and resolve to die ;  
Think on the paths their holy army trod,  
Nor, for preserving life, offend your God ;  
Think of the crown religion's sure to bring,  
Nor wait for pardon from a tyrant king.  
Fain would he lead your steady faith astray,  
And warp your conscience to his dangerous way.  
His scourge this seeming kindness shall combine,  
And from pollution save each holy shrine.

So spake they, vengeful, and with purpose dire  
Blacken'd the king, 'till fell rebellion's fire

Flamed out afresh, and full of desperate strife  
They scorn to own the debt of forfeit life.  
Midst all these clamors, Henry's virtue known  
Pierced through the skies to God's eternal throne.  
Louis, from whom the Bourbon race begun,  
Saw now the roll of time completely done,  
When his son's error should be purged away,  
And pure religion beam her certain ray.  
Then from his breast fled all the train of fears,  
And faith establish'd dried up all his tears.  
Then soothing hope, and fond paternal love,  
Proved his sure guides to heavenly paths above.

Before time was, in pure effulgence bright  
The God of gods had placed his throne of light ;  
Heaven is beneath his feet ; power, wisdom, love,  
Compose his essence ; while the saints above,  
Triumphant hosts, in deep unfading joys,  
Which neither grief disturbs, nor time destroys,  
Fill'd with his glory, fill'd with God's own Word,  
Adore in endless choirs the sovereign Lord.  
Before him seraphs spread their golden wings,  
By whom he guides all sublunary things.  
He speaks, the earth is changed, and frail mankind,  
The sport of error, and in councils blind  
(Events perceived, but causes undescried),  
Accuse God's wisdom in their selfish pride.  
That wisdom high, while smiting servile Rome,  
Ausonia gave to Northerners as a home—  
Spain to the tawny sons of Afric's sands,  
And Salem's sacred hill to Moslem hands.  
All nations have their mighty tyrant, all  
Rise in their turns, and hasten to their fall.  
Yet not forever tyrants sway their lands ;

Oft falls the sceptre in more favor'd hands,  
And heaven's viceregents, in their actions known,  
Dispense God's favors from a royal throne.

Now Louis, sire of Bourbon's glorious race,  
In plaintive words address'd the Throne of Grace.  
" Lord of the world, if from the azure skies  
Thou lookest on mortals with considering eyes,  
See how rebellion's hateful treason stains  
The generous sons on famed Lutetia's plains.  
If all unmindful of a subject's awe,  
They spurn their king, nor heed the royal law,  
'Tis for thy faith their ardent bosoms feel,  
And disobedience springs from holy zeal.  
Behold the king, of tried, illustrious worth,  
The terror, love, example of the earth ;  
With so much virtue couldst thou form his mind,  
To leave him pathless, and in errors blind ?  
Must thy most perfect work forego all bliss,  
And only Henry thank his God amiss ?  
Let him, henceforth, mistaken notions shun ;  
Give France a master, and the Church a son.  
The ready subjects to their monarch bring,  
And to his subjects true restore the king.  
So in thy praise let all their hearts unite,  
And joyous Paris worship God aright."

His humble prayers the Eternal Maker heard :  
The stars were moved ; earth trembled at His word :  
The Leaguers stood amazed, and Henry's breast  
Glow'd with that faith which God himself imprest.  
When from her mansion, near the eternal throne,  
Truth, dear to mortals, though sometimes unknown,  
Descends ; a veil of clouds, with ample shade,



Conceal'd from mortal ken the lovely maid,  
Till by degrees, as at the approach of day,  
The shadowy mist melts all dissolved away :  
Full to the sight, now all the goddess shone,  
Clear as heaven's light, and cheerful as the sun.  
Henry, whose heart was formed the truth to shrine,  
Sees, knows, reveres, at last, her torch divine ;  
Avows, with faith, that Heaven's sacred light  
Soars above man and humbles Reason's might.  
He now discerns that Church opposed below—  
Church ever one, whose bounds no limit know,  
Free, but not headless—worshipping, not amiss,  
God's sovereign grandeur in his servant's bliss.  
Christ, for our sins who shed his purest blood,  
Now, for his chosen flock the living food,  
To the king's self, who bows with secret dread,  
Shows his true Godhead in the hallow'd bread ;  
The monarch, deep impress'd with holy awe,  
Adores the wonders of the mystic law.

Now sainted Louis, at the Lord's command,  
The peaceful olive waving in his hand,  
Came down from heaven ; a ready guide to bring  
To Paris' opening walls their convert king.  
In God's own name, by whom all monarch's reign,  
He enter'd Paris ;<sup>1</sup> while the Leaguer train  
Submissive bow ; e'en the meddling priests  
Are dumb ; and all around with jocund feasts  
And cries of joy make echoing heaven ring,  
And hail at once a conqueror, father, king.

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<sup>1</sup> This siege and famine occurred in the year 1590, and Henry IV did not enter Paris until the month of March, 1594. He became a Catholic in 1593. But it has been necessary to crowd these three great events in a shorter period, because the narrative is a poem, and not a history.

Henceforth all nations own'd his regal state,  
Too soon determined, as began too late.  
The Austrian trembled ; and by Rome approved,  
In Henry's virtues was his Rome beloved.  
Discord was exiled from Lutetia's shore,  
And Mayenne brave, a rebel now no more,  
Himself, his province, in subjection brings,  
The best of subjects to the best of kings.

# BATTLE OF FONTENOY:

A Poem.

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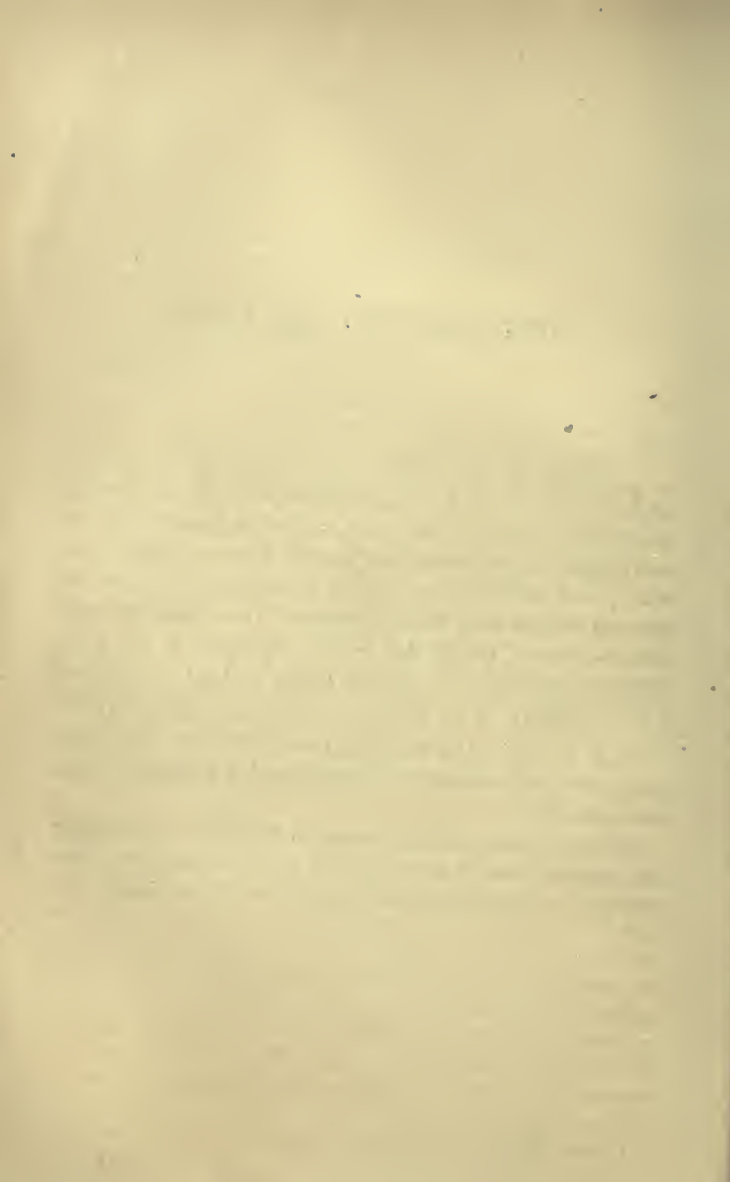
## DEDICATION TO THE KING.

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SIRE :—

I had not the presumption to dedicate the first essay of the following work to you, apprehensive that I might thereby offend the delicacy of the most modest of conquerors; but your Majesty should consider, that this is not a panegyric; it is in part a faithful picture of the most glorious battle that ever was fought since that of Bovines. It contains the sentiments of France, though but weakly expressed; it is a poem without exaggeration—important truths, without any alloy of fiction or flattery. Your Majesty's name will transmit this weak sketch to posterity as an authentic monument of so many glorious actions performed in your presence, and in imitation of your great example.

Vouchsafe then, royal sir, to add to the favor of permitting this address, that of accepting the profound respects of the least of your subjects, but the warmest of your admirers.





## PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE.

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It is well known to the public, that this work, composed, at first, with all the rapidity of zeal, was considerably increased in every subsequent edition. All the different circumstances of the victory at Fontenoy, which were, from day to day, heard of at Paris, deserved to be particularly celebrated; and what was at first only a hundred lines, is now swelled into a poem which contains above three hundred and forty; but care has been taken to preserve it in the same order, which consists in the prelude, the action, and the conclusion. This order has been even put in a still clearer light, by giving in this edition a description of the several nations of which the hostile army was composed, and specifying their three different attacks.

The nations, over which Louis XIV triumphed, are here depicted in true but not insulting colors; for example, where it is said of the Dutch, that they formerly shook off the yoke of *cruel Austria*, the obvious meaning of the words is, *the yoke of Austria then cruel to them*; for Austria is, now, by no means cruel to the States-General; and the queen of Hungary, who adds so much to the glory of the house of Austria, is not ignorant of the profound respect that the French bear to her person and virtues, at the same time that they are obliged to fight against her.

Where it is said, in speaking of the English, *ferocity gives way to valor*, care has been taken to apprise the reader in notes to all the different editions, that this reproach of ferocity falls upon the soldiers alone.

Certain it is, that when the English troops filed off from

Fontenoy, many soldiers of that nation cried out, *no quarter*. It is likewise known, that when M. de Séchelles seconded the king's intentions with extraordinary foresight, and caused as much care to be taken of the wounded prisoners of the enemy as of our own men, some of the English foot were guilty of outrages against our soldiers, when in the wagons which carried off the wounded both of the vanquished and victorious party. Officers, who have nearly the same education all over Europe, have the same generosity of disposition; but there are countries, where the common people, free from restraint, are more fierce and brutal than elsewhere. The author has not, for that reason, been more sparing in his praises of the valor and conduct of that nation; and he has taken particular care never to mention the Duke of Cumberland, without bestowing upon him those eulogiums, which his qualities exact from all the world.

Some foreigners have endeavored to persuade the public, that the celebrated Addison, in his poem upon the campaign of Hochstedt, has spoken more honorably of the king's household troops, than the author of the poem upon the battle of Fontenoy. The author, induced by this reproach, consulted Mr. Addison's poem at the king's library, and was very much surprised to find a great deal more abuse than praise in it. The passage begins about the three hundredth line. There is no occasion either for citing or answering it; the king's household troops have sufficiently refuted it by conquering. With no intention to deny so great a poet, and so discerning a philosopher as Mr. Addison, his due praise, it is certain that he would have behaved in a manner more worthy of the name of poet and philosopher, if he had spoken with more caution of crowned heads, which even an enemy should respect; and if he had reflected, that the praises bestowed by victors upon the vanquished add a new laurel to the former. There is some reason to think, that when Mr. Addison was made Secretary of State, the minister regretted the unbecoming expressions which had dropped from the author.

If the English poem overflows with gall, this, on the other

hand, breathes nothing but humanity. The author's intention was to inspire benevolent sentiments, while he celebrated a battle. Perish the wretch who can take delight in nothing but in pictures of destruction and representations of human misery!

The nations of Europe have principles of humanity, which are not to be found in the other quarters of the world; they are better united with each other; they have certain laws, which are common to them all; all their royal families are related; the inhabitants of each kingdom travel among their neighbors, and by that means keep up a reciprocal connection with them. The European Christians are in this respect in the same state with the ancient Greeks; they are engaged in frequent wars with each other; but, in the midst of these dissensions, they generally observe so much decorum and politeness, that it often happens, that a Frenchman, an Englishman, and a German meeting, seem to be natives of the same city. True it is, that the Lacedemonians and Thebans were less polished than the people of Athens; but the several different nations of Greece looked upon each other as allies, who never waged war but with a view to the re-establishment of peace; and they seldom insulted enemies, who were to become their friends in a few years. It is upon this principle the author has endeavored to make this work a monument of the French monarch's glory, not of the shame of the nations over which he triumphed. He would be concerned, had he written against them with as much bitterness as is to be met with in some of the invectives which Frenchmen have written against this poem composed by one of their countrymen; but the jealousy between author and author is much stronger than that between nation and nation.

It is said of the Swiss, that they are our ancient friends and fellow-citizens, because they have been so these two hundred and fifty years past. It is said of the foreigners that serve in our armies, that they followed the example set them by the king's household troops and by our other forces; because it is in effect the part of the nation that fights for its prince to set

the example, and a more noble example was never set before. The French can never be denied the glory of valor and politeness. A certain author has had the hardihood to assert, that the following verse,

*Je vois cet etranger qu'on croit né parmi nous,*

was meant as a compliment to a general born in Saxony for having the air of a Frenchman. Air and deportment are here entirely out of the question : any man of common discernment will plainly perceive, that the meaning of the verse is, that this general's attachment to the king was as great as if he had been born his subject.

This criticism is much of a piece with that of a certain person, who advanced, that it was not proper to say of the same general, that he was dangerously ill, when in effect his courage made him forget the state of pain to which he was reduced, and enabled him to triumph, at once, over the weakness of his body and the enemies of his king.

Decency admits of no other answer to those, who have so notoriously violated its laws.

The author's sole view was to recite faithfully whatever came to his knowledge ; and his only regret was the not having it in his power to celebrate all the glorious actions he has since heard of, confined as he was by want of time and the small compass of his work ; it was not in his power to say every thing, but all that he has said is true : adulation would have disgraced a work, whose basis is the glory of the nation. He was so entirely engrossed by the pleasure of telling the truth, that he did not think of sending his work to the great personages celebrated in it, till it had gone through six editions.

All who are named therein had not equal opportunities of signalizing themselves. The colonel, who, at the head of his regiment, waited the order to advance, could not do as important services as the lieutenant-general, who gave the advice to attack the English forces with vigor, and who galloped off to head the charge of the king's household troops upon them. But if the great action of one deserves to be related, the ar-

dent courage of the other should by no means be passed over in silence. One receives general praises for his valor, another is celebrated for some particular service; the wounds of some are commemorated, the tribute of grief is paid to the death of others.

In this manner the celebrated Monsieur Despréaux did justice to the memory of those who had been concerned in passing the Rhine. He cites about twenty names; there are in this poem above sixty, and the reader would find four times the number did the nature of the work admit of it.

It would be something extraordinary if, while Homer, Virgil, and Tasso have described the wounds of a thousand imaginary warriors, a modern poet should not be allowed the privilege of celebrating those of real heroes, who lavished their blood for their king and country, and among whom there were several whom he had the honor of knowing, and whose loss he sincerely regrets.

The scrupulous attention given to this edition should vouch for the several facts related in the poem. There is no one but what should be dear to the nation, and to the several families interested in them. Indeed, who can avoid being sensibly affected in reading the name of a son, a brother, a dear relative, or a friend, killed, wounded, or risking his life in a battle which will be forever famous; who, I say, can avoid being affected at reading such a name in a poem, which, weak as it is, has been, more than once, honored by the perusal of our monarch, and which his majesty permitted to be dedicated to him only because he overlooked his own eulogium, in consideration of that of the officers who fought and conquered under his command?

The author's work should rather be looked upon as the production of a good citizen than of a poet. He did not think it necessary to adorn this poem with fiction, especially during the first eagerness of the public, when the whole attention of Europe was engaged by interesting narratives of that victory purchased with so much blood.

Fiction may embellish a subject in itself less great, less in-



teresting, or placed at such a distance as to cause less agitation in the mind. It was three months after the action that Boileau amused himself by describing the passage over the Rhine; and that action, brilliant as it was, is not to be compared, either for importance or danger, to a pitched battle, gained over an enemy skilled in the art of war, intrepid, and superior in number, by a king who, with his son, stood exposed during four hours to the fire of the artillery.

Not till after he had indulged the first emotions of zeal, and exerted himself to the utmost to praise those who had faithfully served their country upon this important occasion, did the author take the liberty of inserting in his poem some of those fictions, which, lavished, would only weaken the subject, and render it less striking and animated: and in this preface he has said nothing in prose but what Mr. Addison himself has said in verse in his celebrated poem upon the campaign of Hochstedt. It is by no means out of place, two thousand years after the war of Troy, to represent Venus bestowing upon her son Æneas arms forged by Vulcan, which were to render that hero invulnerable. It is equally allowed to paint a deity presenting him with the sword, which he was to plunge into the breast of his enemy. The council of the gods may be assembled, and all hell let loose; Alecto may pour her poison into the hearts of men, and intoxicate their minds with frenzy; but neither the taste of the age, the subject of the poem, which is a recent event, nor the narrow limits to which it is confined, admit of those picturesque allegories which are now worn threadbare by the poets. The world should excuse a citizen, deeply affected with his subject, for giving more scope to the emotions of his heart than to the sallies of his imagination; and the author acknowledges that he felt more in writing these lines:

“Tu meurs, jeune Craon ! que le ciel moins severe  
Veille sur les destins de ton genereux frere !”

“Craon, thou fall'st ! may heaven, less severe,  
Make thy brave brother's fate its chiefest care.”



than if he had called up the Furies to deprive some youthful warrior of life.

Divine agents are necessary in an epic poem, especially when the heroes of fabulous ages are introduced. But here it is the true Jupiter, the true Mars, a king intrepid in the midst of danger, and who ventures his life for subjects of whom he is the father. It is he, it is his son, it is those who conquered under his auspices, that the poet intended, and that it was his duty to represent, and not a Juno or a Juturna. Again, the few who have a competent knowledge of our poetry are well aware that it is much easier to make heaven, earth, and hell engage in a battle, than to distinguish, by just and sensible images, carabineers who carry rifled arms, grenadiers, dragoons, who fight both on foot and horseback; to mention retrenchments raised in a hurry; an enemy that advances in a battalion; and in a word, to speak in verse of things which have hitherto never been spoken of except in prose.

This was the opinion of Mr. Addison, at once an ingenious poet, and a judicious critic. In the poem by which he has immortalized the campaign of Hochstedt, he has used much less fiction than has been admitted by the author of that upon the battle of Fontenoy. He was not ignorant that the Duke of Marlborough and Prince Eugene would have been but little pleased to see gods, where only the great actions of men should be displayed. He was likewise aware that the exploits of antiquity may be heightened by invention; but that those of the moderns run great risk of being weakened by insipid allegories; he took a much wiser course: he interested all Europe in his action.

These short poems of three or four hundred lines upon the affairs of the present age, resemble a tragedy, in one respect: the ground-work of them should be of itself interesting; and foreign ornaments are almost always superfluous.

It was judged proper to specify the different corps that engaged, their arms, their posts, and the place where they attacked the enemy; relate that the English battalion penetrated to our ranks, and show how it was routed and broken by the

king's household troops, the carabineers, the gendarmerie, the Norman regiment, the Irish brigade, etc. Had not the author entered into a circumstantial detail of these particulars, in which so much heroism was displayed, the battle of Fontenoy would be in nothing distinguished from that of Tolbiac. Mons. Despréaux, in his poem upon the passage of the Rhine, has the following lines :

“Revel les suit de pres ; sous ce chef redouté.  
Marche de cuirassiers l'escadron indoimpté.”

“Next Revel follows, under whose command  
Marches, of cuirassiers, a hardy band.”

The author of the following poem has given a picturesque description of the carabineers, instead of calling them by their name, which is more inharmonious than that of cuirassiers. It was thought more advisable to characterize the several provinces of the staff officers, than to give in verse the names of such of that list as were wounded.

The author has, however, thought proper to call the king's household troops by that name, rather than make use of any other term ; this name—household troops—which comprises so many invincible bodies, contains an idea sufficiently great, without the addition of any other figure. Mr. Addison himself has given them no other name. The rapidity of the action furnishes another reason for using this term.

“Vous peuple de heros dont la foule s'avance,  
Louis, son fils, l'etat, l'Europe est en vos mains.  
Maison du roy, marchez,” etc.

The addition of another syllable would have rendered the last line altogether flat and prosaic.

It was judged proper not to deviate a moment from the gravity of the subject. Despréaux, indeed, writing of the passage over the Rhine, pretty nearly in the style of his epistles, has mixed the facetious with the heroic ; for, immediately after the following verses,

“Un bruit s'épand qu'Enghien et Condé sont passez ;  
Condé dont le seul nom fait tomber les murailles,

Force les escadrons et gagne les batailles,  
 Enghien, de son hymen, le seul et digne fruit," etc.,

"That Enghien and Condé now are past,  
 The busy goddess Fame aloud declares ;  
 Condé, whose force o'erturns walls built to last,  
 Whose upraised arm all adverse power o'erbears ;  
 Enghien, the worthy son of such a sire,"

he proceeds thus :

"Bientôt—mais Wurts s'oppose à l'ardeur qui m'anime,  
 Finissons ; il est temps ; aussi bien si la rime  
 Allait, mal à propos, m'engager dans Arnheim,  
 Je ne sais, pour sortir, de porte qu'Hildesheim.

"Soon—but Wurts quenches my poetic fire,  
 Hold, it is time ; for if my patriot ire  
 Should rashly lead me to Arnheim,  
 There will be no escape but Hildesheim.

Those who have wished that the author, in his narrative poem upon the battle of Fontenoy, had adopted some strokes of this familiar style of Boileau, seem not to have sufficiently distinguished times and places, nor to have duly weighed the difference between an epistle and a work of a more serious and severe sort. What is graceful in the epistolary way might be quite the reverse in the heroic.

It would be improper to say any thing further upon art and taste, at the head of a work which turns upon the most important interests, and which should fill the mind entirely with the ideas of the glory of our king, and the happiness of our country.



# P O E M

UPON

## THE BATTLE OF FONTENOY.

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WHAT ! could the bard—whose famed satiric lays  
Have gain'd a wreath of never-fading bays—  
His voice inspired by energy divine,  
Paint, deluged o'er with blood, the banks of Rhine ;  
Sing how her billows, struck with horror, fled,  
While her defenders round by thousands bled ;  
How e'en her god was seized with dire dismay,  
And to our conquering ancestors gave way !  
And when your king, in fields with crimson dyed,  
Sees instant death fly round on every side ;  
And from proud Tournay, where, with ceaseless roar  
His mortal engines urged the siege before,  
Retires, suspending the besieger's rage,  
And takes the field, impatient to engage ;  
While his great son, by love of glory led,  
For tented fields forsakes the nuptial bed :  
Great through his valor, happy through his care,  
Can you, my countrymen, to praise forbear ?  
Behold your monarch deathless glory gain,  
Where Fontenoy extends her spacious plain.

Glory and virtue, powers divine attend—  
You, who our monarch aid, and who defend—  
Bellona, goddess of the dreadful fight,  
Minerva, who in wisdom doth delight :  
Thou, ruling passion of each generous heart,  
Our Country's Love, your succor now impart ;  
My laboring breast, oh ! powers divine inspire,  
And fill the poet with a warrior's fire ;  
Paint their great actions in a deathless page,  
Such as may live to every distant age.  
My soul on fancy's pinions wings her way,  
The adverse hosts already I survey ;  
Their bands I see with mutual hate engage,  
I see the battle glow with ten-fold rage ;  
I see the haughty Saxon there advance,  
Maurice,<sup>1</sup> among us deem'd a son of France,  
Hovering upon the brink of endless night,  
His deathless soul, prepared to take its flight,  
In sorrow lingers, poised upon the wing,  
Unwilling to desert its leaguer'd king ;  
A single day on earth its last desire,  
Then from earth's scenes contented to retire.  
Propitious Heaven, attend the hero's ways,  
For Louis' sake, and ours, prolong his days.  
The trench forsaking, Harcourt<sup>2</sup> joins our host ;  
Each danger is foreseen, assign'd each post ;  
Attach'd both to his country and the throne,  
Noailles<sup>3</sup> the good of France regards alone.

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<sup>1</sup> Marshal Saxe, being dangerously ill during the battle, was carried through the ranks in a litter, when his weakness, and the pains he felt, rendered him unable to ride. When the king embraced him after the victory, he expressed the same sentiments that are ascribed to him here.

<sup>2</sup> The Duke of Harcourt had invested Tournay.

<sup>3</sup> A Marshal of France.



The mighty D'Eu,<sup>1</sup> whose birth from Condé springs,  
D'Eu, whose right arm the Gallic lightning wings ;  
The chief,<sup>2</sup> for youth remark'd, for valor more,  
Whose great exploits the Mein had seen before ;  
Boufflers and Luxembourg, untaught to yield,  
Depons, Bavaria, hasten to the field ;  
The stroke decisive at their posts they wait,  
Their men attend with sanguine hope elate :  
Danoy,<sup>3</sup> who still with fortune favor found,  
Bérenger for the Rhine's defence renown'd ;  
Chabanes, Colbert, and Galerande advance,  
Du Chaila, all the hardy chiefs of France ;<sup>4</sup>  
These, in the silent horror of the night,  
Wait with impatience for the promised fight.  
Already from the east, the dawn of day  
Upon the standards darts a feeble ray ;  
Standards, which twenty different nations bear,  
That threat'ning death wave proudly in the air.  
The Flemings ruled by France in time of yore,  
Who then knew plenty which they know no more ;  
The Dutch to whom the Indies homage pay,  
By industry and freedom raised to sway,  
Who, long oppress'd by Austria's laws severe,  
Now arm for those whose yoke they could not bear ;  
The Hanoverian's ever-constant band,  
To combat brave, and prompt t'obey command ;  
The haughty Austrians of past greatness vain,

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<sup>1</sup> Master of the artillery.

<sup>2</sup> The Duke of Penthièvre, who had signalized himself at the battle of Dettingen.

<sup>3</sup> Monsieur de Danoy was taken by his nurse out of a heap of dead and dying men, at the battle of Malplaquet, two days after it was fought : this is a certain fact. The same woman came with a passport, accompanied by a serjeant of the king's regiment, in which he was then an officer.

<sup>4</sup> The lieutenant-generals in their several divisions.

And the long glories of their Cæsar's reign :  
Chief the aspiring nation, that with pride  
Beholds her greatness swell on every side ;  
And of the Gallic glory jealous still,  
Thinks Europe's balance subject to her will.  
All these pour on us eager to engage,  
By hope seduced, by hatred fired to rage.  
The never-conquer'd genius of the State  
Attends our monarch, and defies their hate ;  
Roused by the din of war, the gods repair  
From rivers, woods, and floods to fields of air.  
Doubtful for whom their silver stream shall flow  
And in whose fertile plains their harvests grow.  
Fortune displays a laurel wreath on high,  
And hovering near them wings the azure sky :  
Provoked that, independent of her sway,  
Valor alone shall win the glorious day.  
Cumberland, who the allied hosts commands,  
To firm array draws out his hardy bands ;  
Not where Scamander flow'd in many a round,  
Under those walls in ancient song renown'd,  
Did the great heroes of that famous age  
Like these with order in the field engage.  
But such was Scipio, such the chief, whose fate  
In ruin plunged the Carthaginian State ;  
Skill, equal to their courage, they display'd,  
Each to his rival's worth due homage paid.  
Ruin and death in various forms appear,  
But Louis' dauntless bosom knows no fear.  
With their rude throats a hundred cannon gave  
The signal, then march'd forth the squadron brave.  
With firm and speedy pace, in just array,  
Towards our ranks they took their hostile way ;  
Before them Terror stalks, a phantom dire ;

Onward they march, environ'd all with fire ;  
Thus a thick cloud by winds is borne on high,  
Whence lightning, thunder, and destruction fly.  
They come, those rivals of our monarch's fame,  
More fierce than we, their worth perhaps the same ;  
Quickened to hope by battle-fields of yore.  
Bourbons revenge whate'er the Valois bore !  
With direful shock the hosts three times engage,  
Thrice change the ground, yet meet with equal rage.  
The French, whose fire their leader strove to rein,  
With art to prowess join'd their posts maintain ;  
The cruel hand of death strikes either side,  
And constant carnage swells the bloody tide.  
By the sword's edge, or by a leaden death,  
Chiefs, soldiers, officers, resign their breath :  
Sharing a common fate, in heaps they lie,  
The dead embracing those just doom'd to die,  
While groans of anguish, mix'd with fearful prayer,  
For heaven's vengeance rouse the swooning air.  
Gramont, for valor and for worth renown'd,  
Cover'd with wounds lies prostrate on the ground ;  
Blest had he known, e'er sunk in endless night,  
That Louis was victorious in the fight.  
What now avail his titles of command,<sup>1</sup>  
The warrior's truncheon which once graced his hand,  
Honors on which the great in vain presume,  
With them forgotten in the silent tomb !  
Craon,<sup>2</sup> thou fall'st ! may heaven, less severe,  
Make thy brave brother's fate its chiefest care.

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<sup>1</sup> He was on the point of being created a marshal of France.

<sup>2</sup> Nineteen officers belonging to the regiment of Hainaut, were either killed or wounded. The Prince de Beauvan, brother to Craon, was serving in Italy.

Say, much-loved Longaunay,<sup>1</sup> what art can save  
 Such worth as thine from an untimely grave?  
 Those sons of Mars,<sup>2</sup> who at their chief's command,  
 Darted like lightning on the hostile band,  
 Stopp'd in their course impetuous, breathless fall,  
 Their speed o'ertaken by the murderous ball;  
 As birds when shot upon their airy round,  
 Precipitately fall upon the ground.  
 D'Havré<sup>3</sup> is by a hostile sabre slain;  
 D'Aubeterre beholds upon the ensanguined plain,  
 Close by his side, his dauntless chiefs expire,  
 Victims or to the hostile sword or fire;  
 Warriors, whom Chabillant with Brancas leads,  
 How many English slain appease your shades!  
 Mars, sanguinary god, our thanks we pay,  
 That Colbert's noble race<sup>4</sup> escaped that day:  
 E'en war's fierce god in virtue takes delight,  
 Since Guerchi<sup>5</sup> 'scapes uninjured from the fight.  
 But thou, brave d'Aché,<sup>6</sup> what shall be thy fate?  
 'Tis Heaven's thy years to lengthen or abate.  
 Hapless Lutteaux,<sup>7</sup> with wounds all cover'd o'er,  
 Striving to cure thee, Art but tortures more:  
 Thou diest in torments, while with ceaseless prayer,  
 We importune the gods thy life to spare.  
 How many virtues does the tomb devour!

<sup>1</sup> Monsieur de Longaunay, colonel of the new grenadiers, died of his wounds after the battle.

<sup>2</sup> General officers, de Puységur, de Mézières, de St. Sauveur, de St. George.

<sup>3</sup> The Duke d'Havré, colonel of the crown regiment.

<sup>4</sup> M. de Croissy, with his two sons and his nephew, M. Duplessis Châtillon, was slightly wounded.

<sup>5</sup> All the officers of his regiment (Royal-des-Vaisseaux) were *hors de combat*: he alone escaped unhurt.

<sup>6</sup> M. d'Aché ('tis generally written d'Apcher) a lieutenant-general.

<sup>7</sup> M. de Lutteaux, a lieutenant-general, who died in the surgeon's hands.

How brilliant youth is nipt, e'en in its flower !  
What tears our bloody laurels should bedew !  
Conquests so dearly bought, how should we rue !  
Those valiant leaders perish in the field,  
Our happy lives each day new pleasures yield ;  
Voluptuous ease and luxury unite,  
To glut our souls with every soft delight.  
This bliss our sovereign purchased at the head  
Of armed hosts ; for this our warriors bled :  
Then strew the sweetest flowers on their grave,  
Each hallow'd name from black oblivion save.  
You, who the thunder roll'd, who felt its rage,  
Thrice honor'd chief,<sup>1</sup> live in our grateful page !  
Is there a man with heart unfeeling curst,  
Sparing to praise, and prone to think the worst ;  
Who, led by sordid jealousy astray,  
Can envy them the tribute which I pay ?  
If there is one whose breast ne'er learn'd to glow  
At public good, or feel for public woe ;  
Who hears this praise with a neglectful ear,  
Ungrateful men ! for Louis learn to fear.  
The fiery torrent, spreading as it goes,  
Fed with new fuel, still more furious grows ;  
Not winter inundations, swell'd with rain,  
Not tides impetuous of the roaring main,  
Are half so rapid in their headlong course,  
Or headlong rush with such ungovern'd force,  
As the battalion, which, in close array,  
Against our adverse legions took its way.  
They march'd with sabres brandish'd o'er their head,  
And mark'd a passage by the heaps of dead ;  
The god of battle for their side declared,

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<sup>1</sup> M. du Brocard, brigadier-general, and commander of the artillery.



Our monarch saw the danger ; it repair'd.  
 His son, his only hope . . . . loved prince, forbear,  
 Where do you haste ? is life not worth your care ?  
 The Dauphin's danger only can inspire  
 Louis with dread, the son<sup>1</sup> fears for the sire :  
 For both our warriors fear ; that fear alone  
 Touches their hearts, all other dread's unknown.  
 Guards of the king,<sup>2</sup> protectors brave of France,  
 Nations of heroes, who in crowds advance,  
 Haste to the fight ! 'tis yours to fix our fate,  
 Save Europe, save the king, the prince, and State.  
 March, household troops, vanquish without delay,  
 Your chiefs<sup>3</sup> to certain conquest lead the way.  
 You hardy veterans,<sup>4</sup> whose experienced hands  
 Launch distant death on the hostile bands ;  
 Advance,<sup>5</sup> you chosen troops, our army's boast,  
 With balls of fire annoy the adverse host !  
 Squadrons of Louis, crush those haughty foes !  
 Courage like yours they're worthy to oppose.  
 Richelieu, who flies where'er the hosts engage,  
 Valiant with knowledge, and with ardor sage ;  
 Favorite of Love, by Mars to combat taught,

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<sup>1</sup> A cannon-ball covered a man with earth who stood between the king and the Dauphin ; and a servant of Count d'Argenson received a shot of a musket just behind them.

<sup>2</sup> The king's guards, the gendarmes, the light-horse, the musketeers, commanded by Lieutenant-General de Montesson, two battalions of the French and Swiss guards, etc.

<sup>3</sup> The Prince of Soubise and Mons. de Peequigny are here named in the original ; the former undertook to second the Count de la Marek in obstinately defending the post d'Antoin : he afterwards headed the gendarmes, while M. de Peequigny headed the light-horse, which contributed not a little to the victory.

<sup>4</sup> The carabineers, a corps established by Louis XIV ; they fire with rifled carabines. Everybody knows what high praises the king bestowed upon them in his letter.

<sup>5</sup> The horse-grenadiers, commanded by the Chevalier de Grille ; they march at the head of the king's household troops.



By wisdom's goddess to express each thought ;  
 He calls your bands ;<sup>1</sup> his soul, discerning, knows  
 From whence your enemy's success arose.  
 Depending on your valor Richelieu flies,  
 And shows where you may win the victor's prize.  
 La Marck,<sup>2</sup> la Vauguyon,<sup>3</sup> chiefs great in fight,  
 Valiant Choiseul, endow'd with matchless might,  
 A turf retrenchment's weak defence oppose  
 Against the fury of their warlike foes ;  
 Yet thus they stem the hostile torrent's force,  
 And stay an army in its headlong course.  
 D'Argenson, whom his father's presence fires,  
 Whose bosom ardent zeal for France inspires,  
 Struck with the danger of the best of kings,  
 Excited by the blood from whence he springs,  
 Attack'd three times that formidable band,  
 Which, like a fiery rampart, seem'd to stand.  
 Stopp'd, he undaunted to the charge returns,  
 And with redoubled rage his bosom burns.  
 Thus battering-rams with strokes redoubled plied  
 A town whose ramparts shook on every side.  
 That brilliant regiment, well known to fame,<sup>4</sup>  
 With which famed Catinat the foe o'ercame,  
 Came, saw, and fought ; the glory they had gain'd,  
 More glory still acquiring, they maintain'd.  
 Young Castelmoron, glórious was your part ;

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<sup>1</sup> The Marquis d'Argenson, who, during the battle, never once quitted the king, wrote to Voltaire these words : *It was Mons. de Richelieu who gave this advice, and carried it into execution.*

<sup>2</sup> The Count de la Marck at the post d'Antoin.

<sup>3</sup> M. de la Vauguyon, Choiseul-Meuse, etc., at the retrenchment hastily thrown up at the village of Fontenoy. Mons. de Créqui was not at that post, but headed the carabineers, as was said above.

<sup>4</sup> Four squadrons of gendarmes arrived, after a seven hours' march, and attacked the enemy.

In tender years you show'd a manly heart ;  
Your feeble arm <sup>1</sup> from the stern English bore  
The bloody standard, which they took before.  
But Chevrier falls a victim to their ire,  
And Love with sighs sees Monaco expire.  
Ye English, twice du Guesclin feels your rage ;  
Shrink at that name, to you of dire presage.  
What brilliant hero, midst the horrid fray,  
Falls, and then rising, cuts himself a way ?  
Biron, <sup>2</sup> thy fathers upon Ivry's plain,  
Thus fought great Henry's empire to maintain.  
Such Crillon was, in worth and rank supreme,  
Among the valiant, a distinguished name ;  
Such the D'Aumonts and Créquis, chiefs renown'd ;  
The Montmorency's still with conquest crown'd ;  
Heroes who brightly shone in former days,  
The sons now emulate their fathers' praise.<sup>3</sup>  
Such was Turenne, who in the field of fame  
Was taught by arms to win a deathless name,  
Under another chief <sup>4</sup> of Saxon birth,  
Whose conquering arm with terror shook the earth,  
When, in another Louis' glorious days,  
Justice and Mars at once conspired to raise  
Gallia to grandeur hitherto unknown,

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<sup>1</sup> A mettlesome horse had hurried the ensign into the English battalion. Mons. de Castelmoron, who was then but fifteen years of age, accompanied with four more, went and retook it in the midst of the enemy's camp. Mons. de Bellet commanded the squadrons of the gendarmes ; he had a horse killed under him. The same accident happened to Mons. de Chimènes, while he was reforming a brigade.

<sup>2</sup> The Duke de Biron commanded the infantry, when M. de Lutteurs fell ; he charged successively at the head of almost all the brigades.

<sup>3</sup> M. de Luxembourg, M. de Logni, and M. de Tingry.

<sup>4</sup> The Duke of Saxe-Weimar, under whom the Viscount de Turenne made his first campaigns. M. de Turenne is the great-grand-nephew of that great man.

And make proud Austria for her crimes atone.  
Can polish'd courtiers, used to soft delight,  
Thus rush like lions furious to the fight?  
How grace and valor happily combine!  
How Boufflers, Meuse, d'Ayen, and Duras shine!  
At Louis' voice intrepid troops advance;  
Led by their king, how great the sons of France!  
They'll surely conquer, headed by their sire!  
No headlong instinct does his soul inspire;  
Free from all passion, he, with mind serene,  
Can o'er himself and over fortune reign;  
His vigilance can suffer no surprise,  
No error cast a mist before his eyes;  
He marches like the cloud-compelling sire,  
Hurling at Titans heaven's vindictive fire,  
Whose boisterous rage he guided by a nod,  
And in the storm with brow unruffled trod.  
He marches thus; beneath his hosts the ground  
Groans, and the noise is echo'd all around;  
The ocean roars, the Scheldt its fountain's head  
Astonish'd seeks; with darkness heaven's o'erspread.  
Beneath a cloud, which, with a hideous roar,  
From northern caves the winds impetuous bore,  
The Valois' conquerors enraged descend.  
"On you, great duke,"<sup>1</sup> they cried, "we all depend;  
Rally your hardy legions to the fight.  
Batavians! guard your barriers and your right.  
Since peace, ye English! fills you with alarms,  
Against a king who loves it turn your arms;  
Will you his valor as his friendship fear?"  
In vain they urge, for Louis soon draws near.  
Their genius fails, the English lose the field,

---

<sup>1</sup> The Duke of Cumberland.

Ferocious rage<sup>1</sup> to valor has to yield.  
 The valiant Clare, who heads Ilibernia's powers,  
 At once defends his country's cause and ours.  
 Happy Helvetians,<sup>2</sup> faithful race, and sage,  
 With France united during many an age,  
 Drawn up in close compacted firm array,  
 Ye follow where fierce Neustrians<sup>3</sup> lead the way.  
 That Dane,<sup>4</sup> that hero of immortal fame,  
 Who from the frozen north to Gallia came,  
 Beholds our nation with astonish'd eyes,  
 When suddenly he hears a thousand cries :  
 "Or die ! or to our force superior yield !"

Louis at length has won the bloody field.  
 Go, brave d'Estrée,<sup>5</sup> the mighty work complete !  
 Go, chain the foes who have escaped from Fate !  
 Let them implore his aid whom they defied :  
 To yield to him will scarce abate their pride.<sup>6</sup>  
 Swift after them these rapid warriors ride,  
 Who like the dragon,<sup>7</sup> formerly their guide,  
 Are prompt to fight on foot, or urge the steed  
 Against the foe, and noted for their speed.

<sup>1</sup> This reproach of ferocity is levelled at the soldiers alone, not at the officers, who are as generous as ours. I have been informed by letter, that when the English battalion filed off from Fontenoy, many of the soldiers belonging to that body cried out, "No quarter."

<sup>2</sup> The regiments of Diesbach, Betens, Courten, etc., with battalions of the Swiss guards.

<sup>3</sup> The Norman regiment, which charged the English battalion a second time, at the same time that the household troops, the gendarmes, the carabineers, etc., poured down upon it.

<sup>4</sup> M. de Löwenthal.

<sup>5</sup> The Count d'Estrée, at the head of his division, and M. de Brionne, at the head of his regiment, had forced the English grenadiers sword in hand.

<sup>6</sup> Since the reign of St. Louis, no king of France had in person defeated the English in a pitched battle.

<sup>7</sup> Some troops of dragoons were sent in pursuit of the enemy : that corps was commanded by the Duke de Chevreuse, who had distinguished him-

Thus in Numidia's plains, with rapid race,  
 Intrepid bands of hunters urge the chase;  
 Across the field the foaming coursers bound,  
 They climb the hills, the forests they surround;  
 The snares are spread, the hunters watch with care,  
 And balls and pointed javelins pierce the air;  
 With wounds the bloody leopards cover'd o'er,  
 Make the wide forests echo with their roar;  
 Then to some shady wood's recess repair,  
 To hide their rage, and howl in secret there.  
 Enough our foes as well as friends have bled,  
 Too long you walk on mountains of the dead.  
 Noailles,<sup>1</sup> retire with your triumphant bands!  
 Mars, overjoy'd, sees their victorious hands  
 Draw to our camp those tubes for ruin framed,  
 Whose thunder at our heads so long was aim'd.  
 Come, turn against the foe their hostile balls,  
 And with them batter Tournay's lofty walls;  
 Tournay, now Holland's barrier and retreat,  
 Which was of Gallic monarchs once the seat.<sup>2</sup>  
 Tournay surrenders, terrors Ghent<sup>3</sup> invade;  
 Disturbed and restless, the fifth Charles'<sup>4</sup> shade  
 Loud crying flies the city in its strait,

---

self in the fight at Sahy, where he had received three wounds. The most probable opinion with regard to the etymology of the word dragoon is, that there was the figure of a dragon upon their standards in the time of the Marshal de Brissac, who raised that corps during the wars of Piedmont.

<sup>1</sup> The Count de Noailles attacked the battalion of English infantry with a brigade of horse, which afterwards took their artillery.

<sup>2</sup> Tournay was the principal city belonging to the French under the first race of their kings. The tomb of Childeric was found there.

<sup>3</sup> The city of Ghent was surrendered to his Majesty on the 11th of July, after Monsieur du Chaila, at the head of the brigades of Crillon and Normandy, the regiment of Grassin, etc., had defeated a body of English.

<sup>4</sup> Charles the Fifth was born at Tournay in the year 1500, on the 25th of February. Philip, archduke of Austria, was his father, and Joan of Castile, heiress to the crown of Spain, his mother.



Where he was born to be by conquest great.  
He flies, but what beholds the frightened ghost?  
Those spacious plains all cover'd by our host.  
Routed and broke he sees the English bands,  
Leaving their standards in our soldiers hands;  
The Dutch in vain retiring from the stroke,  
While on the ground Ghent's ruin'd ramparts smoke,  
The place that gave the first of Cæsars<sup>1</sup> birth,  
By Louis' car triumphant crush'd to earth.  
Ostend,<sup>2</sup> which erst for three long years had braved  
A hundred fierce assaults, now humbly craved,  
Our monarch's mercy, ere ten days had shone,  
And Albion shudder'd on her sea-girt throne.  
O happy Franks, ye victors mild and brave,  
Come and rear high within the peaceful nave,  
Arms, standards, trophies of that day of fire,  
And let your victors' chant our chant inspire.  
Ye warriors brave, who emulate your king,  
The hero to his grateful people bring;  
Palms in their hands, your fellow-subjects burn  
For your long-wish'd-for, prosperous return;  
Your wives and children, for your past distress  
And danger terrified, around you press.  
They haste with ardor to your loved embrace,  
With tears of joy to bathe each manly face.  
Your wish'd return no longer then delay,  
Kind love prepares the prize of worth to pay.

---

<sup>1</sup> Of the modern Cæsars, i. e., the emperors of Germany.

<sup>2</sup> It was taken in 1604 by Ambrose Spinola, after a siege of three years and three months.



POETICAL DISSERTATIONS.



# POETICAL DISSERTATIONS.

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## DISSERTATION I.

### UPON THE EQUALITY OF CONDITIONS.

THY eye, Aristo, calmly can behold  
Tyrannic greatness, or mere pride of gold ;  
No dazzling tinsel captivates thy eye ;  
This world is but a ball, where fools can vie,  
Mask'd in the titles void of Church and State,  
Their being to expand and littleness make great.  
In vain doth vanity in garb surprise,  
Men are alike ; the masks confuse our eyes ;  
These senses five, weak gifts of nature's hand,  
Of good and evil, as our measures stand :  
Have monarchs six, or body have and mind,

---

<sup>1</sup> The first three Dissertations are of the year 1734 ; the last four are of the year 1737.

The first proves the equality of conditions—that is, that in each profession there is a measure of good and evil that renders them all equal.

The second, that man is free, and, consequently, dependent on himself for happiness.

The third, that the greatest obstacle to happiness is envy.

The fourth, that in order to be happy, it is necessary to be moderate in all things.

The fifth, that pleasure comes from God.

The sixth, that perfect happiness cannot be the portion of man in this world, and that man has no reason for complaining of his condition.

The seventh, that virtue consists in doing good to our fellow-beings, and not in vain practices of mortification.

Form'd in another mould, work of another kind ?  
 From the same slime we all must claim our race,  
 In the same weakness, childhood drags apace,  
 The rich, the poor, the feeble, and the strong  
 To death, from sorrows haste them all along.

"Hold!" you exclaim, "what error fills your breast !  
 Is no state, then, beyond another blest ?  
 Does Heaven make all level in this life ?  
 Is the pale clerk's poor self-denying wife  
 Equal to her who fills the royal throne ?  
 Is it the same, the world or naught to own ?  
 Now, for a priest, is it not a happier fate  
 To clap a scarlet cap upon his pate,  
 Than after morn, or after evening prayer,  
 To expose to discipline his shoulders bare ?  
 In triple bonnet, sure more blest the judge,  
 Than is the clerk, in office doom'd to drudge.  
 God's justice, nature's laws, this rule oppose ;  
 Her gifts she with more equity bestows.  
 Think you she'll ever be so partial found  
 As to have bliss to fortune's chariot bound ?  
 A colonel oft will impudently try  
 In pleasures e'en a marshal to outvie.  
 "Blest as a king," the ignorant vulgar say ;  
 Yet monarchs dearly for their grandeur pay.  
 Vain confidence a king puts in his throne,  
 For grief and spleen to greatness' self are known.  
 Heaven must to all the same attention pay,  
 Mankind it form'd all of one common clay.  
 Let's own that Heaven is just, as well as kind,  
 It has a birthright to each child assign'd :  
 Some crop must still be reap'd from earth's worst spot,  
 He's disinherited who mourns his lot.

Let's without pride possess ; let's bear with grace,  
Since 'twas by God assign'd our earthly place.  
God meant, arranging sublunary things, )  
To make us happy, not to make us kings.  
Before Pandora, if we credit Fame,  
We all were equal ; we are still the same.  
To have an equal title to be blest,  
Puts each upon a level with the rest.  
Those slaves in yonder valley dost thou see,  
Who cut a craggy rock, or lop a tree ;  
Who turn the course of streams ; who with a spade  
The entrails of the fertile earth invade :  
We do not find that model in those plains  
On which were formed Fontenelle's soft swains.  
There Timarette and Tyreis are not found  
Beneath a myrtle shade, with chaplets crown'd,  
Graving upon the oaken bark their names,  
And ever talking of their amorous flames.  
But some rough carle, endued with stubborn heart,  
Who knows through mire to drive the loaded cart :  
Soon as Aurora streaks the russet skies,  
Pierre and his wife from bed are forced to rise.  
They pant, with dust I see them cover'd o'er ;  
Each day they labor as the day before ;  
By toil to cold and heat alike inured,  
Both are by them with equal ease endured :  
And yet they sing in rude tone, without note,  
Ballads which, long ago, Pellegrin<sup>1</sup> wrote.  
Strength, health, sound sleep, the mind's serene repose,  
To poverty and toil the laborer owes.  
No joy at Paris gay can Colin find,

---

<sup>1</sup> The Abbé Pellegrin wrote devotional hymns to the airs of the Pont-Neuf. These hymns were sung in the fields and in the provincial convents.

His ears are deafen'd, uninform'd his mind :  
No joy its splendor to the rustic yields ;  
He overlooks it, and regrets his fields.  
Love's voice excites him thither to repair,  
While Damis, running still from fair to fair,  
In proud apartments lolls at careless ease ;  
Intrigue his business, his desire to please,—  
By his wife hated, duped by his kept dame,  
To every beauty tells his amorous flame ;  
Quits Églé's arms for Chloris coy, who flies,  
And thinks all joy in noise and scandal lies.  
The vigorous, faithful Colin, on love's wing  
Flies to Lisette with return of spring.  
Returning in three months, the rustic swain  
Makes presents, simple like himself, and plain :  
He does not bring those trinkets, rich and rare,  
Which Hébert<sup>1</sup> sells to the deluded fair.  
Without these trifles he secures his joys ;  
He wants them not, they are the happy's toys.  
The rapid eagle through the yielding skies  
After his paramour with ardor flies.  
The bull the heifer seeks with many a bound,  
His lowing love makes all the vale resound.  
Sweet Philomel, soon as the flowers appear,  
Delights with songs his loved companion's ear.  
Forth from the bushes darts the buzzing fly,  
Meets insects, and engenders in the sky ;  
To exist, of all their wishes is the bound,  
They grieve not others are more perfect found.  
What need I care while in my present state  
That other beings have a happier fate ?

---

<sup>1</sup> A famous dealer in fancy articles at Paris. He had much taste, and this alone procured for him a great fortune.



But can that wretch who lies upon the dust,  
Object at once of pity and disgust,  
That breathing skeleton with woes oppress'd,  
Who lives to suffer, say, can he be bless'd ?  
No. But can Thamas, by a slave deposed,  
A vizier in disgrace, a prince opposed,  
Be happy deem'd ? When once they're cast in chains,  
A sad remembrance of their state remains.  
Each state its ills, its disappointments, knows.  
Man's state is varied, various are his woes.  
Less bold in peace, more active in the fight,  
Charles had in England e'er maintain'd his right.  
And had Dufresny<sup>1</sup> lavish'd less his gold,  
He had not died in misery untold.  
'Tis all the same : the court has its fatigues,  
The Church its combats, war has its intrigues.  
Too oft true merit lurks behind a screen ;  
Evil abounds, but bliss is often seen.  
Nor youth, nor age, nor poverty, nor wealth,  
Can e'er restore the wounded soul to health.  
Irus of old, of poverty ashamed,  
Loud against Cræsus' opulence declaim'd :  
"Honor and wealth by Cræsus are possess'd,"  
Cried he, "and only I remain unblest'd."  
While thus he spoke, while thus his rage prevail'd,  
The Carian king an armed host assail'd.  
Of all his courtly train not one remains,  
In fight he's taken, and he's cast in chains ;  
His treasure's lost, his mistress from him torn :  
He weeps, but sees when lost and quite forlorn

---

<sup>1</sup> Louis XIV said : "There are two men whom I shall never be able to enrich, Dufresny and Bontemps." Dufresny died in misery, after having dissipated great riches ; he left some pretty comedies.

Irus, poor Irus, who, the combat o'er,  
Drinks with the victors, thinks of war no more.  
"O Jove," exclaim'd he, "Irus knows the worst :  
Irus is happy, I alone am curst."  
Mistaken both, they should contention fly,  
He errs, who sees a man with envious eye :  
External lustre fills us with surprise ;  
But man's a mystery to human eyes.  
All joy is transient, mirth must have an end ;  
Whither do then the cares of mortals tend ?  
In every clime dwells happiness sincere,  
'Tis nowhere to be found, or everywhere :  
Nowhere entire, but everywhere the same ;  
In God alone exhaustless is the flame :  
'Tis like the gentle fires by heaven fed,  
That everywhere their happy influence shed,  
That mount the clouds, descend to rocks below  
In ocean's depths impart the diamond's glow,  
That mid the North's eternal glaciers live,  
And in Death's regions dark, new being give.  
In what'er state thou'rt born, O mortal, still,  
Resign'd, submit to thy Creator's will.

## DISSERTATION II.

### UPON LIBERTY.

By this word LIBERTY we understand the power of doing what we please. There is, and there can be no other Liberty. Locke has well defined its power.

IN transient life, which some few years comprise,  
If happiness must be true wisdom's prize,  
Who shall to me this sacred treasure send ?  
Does it upon myself or heaven depend ?  
Is it like wit, like beauty, and high birth,  
A lot no prudence can acquire on earth ?  
Say, am I free, or do my limbs and soul  
Some other agent's secret springs control ?  
Is will, which ever hurries me away,  
Slave to the soul, or bears she sovereign sway ?  
Plunged in this doubt, and sighing for relief,  
I raised to heaven my eyes obscured with grief.  
One of those spirits placed besides God's throne,  
To learn and make his will to mortals known,  
Who in him live, fed by the ethereal flame,  
Now left his blest abode and earthward came.  
And oft, by grace, these sons of light are sent  
To free the soul in Error's bondage pent,  
And banish doctors, who in silly pride,  
So boastfully in musty books confide ;  
Who, all elate, and of their system vain,  
Mistake for truth the phantom of their brain.  
"Behold me here," said he, "in mercy sent

To bring thee wisdom, peace, and sweet content.  
What thou would'st learn, to me 'tis joy to show,  
For he who dares to doubt, deserves to know.  
Learn, then, that thou and all the sons of earth,  
Are free as beings of celestial birth.  
Freedom of will in the immortal man  
Bestows true life; such freedom only can.  
Freedom to will, 'as well as to design,  
Stamps us God's own, and makes us heirs divine.  
His word hath form'd the heaven, earth, and seas;  
The body, thus, the will's command obeys.  
Sovereign on earth, and strong by means of thought,  
Nature by thee is to thy purpose brought;  
The zephyr thou command'st, the roaring main;  
Thou canst thy will and e'en desires restrain.  
Of liberty if we the soul divest,  
What is it? 'Tis a subtle flame at best.  
Were we deprived once of the power to choose,  
We should, in fact, our very being lose;  
Machines we should be by the Almighty wrought:  
Curious automata endow'd with thought.  
We should delusion suffer every hour,  
Tools of the Deity's deceitful power.  
Could man, not free, God's image be esteem'd?  
And such as he, be profitable deem'd?  
Sure, he could neither please or give offence;  
And could God punish him, or recompense?  
Justice in heaven and earth must cease to dwell;  
Desfontaines is nor bad, nor good, Pucelle.<sup>1</sup>  
Fate's impulse actuates each human breast,  
And the world's chaos is by vice possess'd.

---

<sup>1</sup> The Abbé Pucelle, a celebrated councillor of parliament. The Abbé Desfontaines, a man who often incurred the censure of the law. He kept open shop, where he sold panegyric and satire to those that bid highest.

The proud oppressor, miser, hard of heart,  
Cartouche, Miriwits, skill'd in fraudulent art;  
The slanderer more criminal than all,  
"May God the causer of his baseness call :  
If I am perjured, 'tis by his command,  
He plunders, robs, and murders by my hand."  
'Tis thus the God who first ordain'd all laws,  
Is made of horrors and black crimes the cause.  
Could those who such a dogma dire maintain,  
Speak of the devil's self in blacker strain?  
Surprise seized on me, as on one at night  
Who wakes surprised to see a sudden light,  
While yet a heavy and half-open'd eye  
With difficulty can the light descry.  
I answer'd, "Can it, heavenly spirit, be  
That mortal man's so weak while he is free?  
Why cannot reason's torch direct his way?  
He follows it, yet often goes astray.  
Why should this paragon so wise and brave,  
Be always thus to vice an abject slave?"  
This answer straight return'd the spirit kind :  
"What groundless grief has thus o'erwhelm'd your mind?  
Sometimes is Liberty impair'd in you,  
But was eternal liberty your due?  
Should it be equal in each time and state  
You'd be a God; to be a man's your fate.  
Shall one drop in the vast unbounded sea  
Exclaim, immensity was made for me?  
No, all is weak in thee, to change inclined :  
Thy beauty, strength, the talents of thy mind.  
All nature has its limits fix'd, we know;  
Shall then man's power be boundless here below?  
But when your heart, which various passions sway,  
To their strong impulse overpower'd, gives way;

When to their force you find your free-will bend,  
You had it sure, since you perceive it end.  
Whene'er you feel the burning fever's flame  
Destined, in time, to undermine your frame,  
But which no dire result, at present, brings,  
Though slowly wearing out life's feeble springs,  
You're sure to turn from death's half-open'd gate  
More healthy, temperate, and far more sedate ;  
And find, as you your rights more strictly scan,  
That liberty of soul is health in man.  
Sometimes its efficacy may subside,  
Subdued by rage, ambition, love, or pride.  
The thirst of knowledge may its power control,  
For foes there are by thousands of the soul.  
But you against them may yourself defend :  
Open this book, consult that learned friend  
(A friend's the gift of heaven, a blessing rare),  
These the soul's *Silvas* and *Helvetius*<sup>1</sup> are—  
May heaven, when men are into vice betray'd,  
Send such efficient helpers to their aid.  
Is there that idiot among human kind  
Who wishes not in danger aid to find ?  
Behold the mortal who free-will arraigns,  
And blindly a blind destiny maintains ;  
See how he ponders, weighs, deliberates ;  
See how he loads with blame the man he hates :  
How he seeks vengeance when with passion warm ;  
How he corrects his son and would reform.  
By this 'tis evident he thought him free ;  
His system and his actions disagree.  
He owns the sentiment he seems to brave ;  
He acts as free, discourses as a slave.

---

<sup>1</sup> Famous physicians of Paris.



Since free, thank God, who freedom did bestow,  
To him the bliss that makes you blest, you owe ;  
Avoid with caution all the vain contest  
Of those that tyrannize the human breast ;  
Firm in thy principles, and just in heart,  
Error compassionate, with truth take part.  
Do not to zeal's suggestions fierce give way,  
He is a brother who is led astray ;  
To be humane, as well as prudent, strive ;  
From others' bliss thy happiness derive."  
The angel's words resounding in my ear,  
My mind was raised above this bounded sphere ;  
I had inquired, at length presumptuous grown,  
Of things reveal'd to heavenly minds alone :  
Of spirit pure, of matter, light, and space  
The elastic spring, eternity, time's race :  
Strange questions, which so frequently confound  
Mairan the subtle, Gravesande<sup>1</sup> the profound,  
And which Descartes in vain strove to explore,  
Whose vortices are now believed no more.  
But then the spirit vanish'd from my sight,  
And sought the regions of eternal light.  
He was not sent me from the ethereal sky,  
To teach the secrets deep of the Most High :  
My eyes by too great light had been oppress'd,  
He said enough, in saying, man, be blest !

---

<sup>1</sup> Gravesande, professor at Leiden ; the first who taught Newton's discoveries. M. Dortous de Mairan, secretary to the Academy of Sciences at Paris.



## DISSERTATION III.

### UPON ENVY.

IF man is free, he o'er himself should reign,  
Attack'd by tyrants, should their rage restrain.  
Vices are tyrants of the human mind,  
And we no vice more fierce and cruel find;  
None more capricious, furious, and more base;  
None which all goodness does so much efface;  
None which envenoms more the human breast,  
Or with dire rankling does so much infest;  
Whose fierce attacks 'tis harder to control,  
Than Envy, the tormentor of the soul.  
Of Pride and Folly, Envy is the child,  
Stubborn, perverse, unteachable, and wild:  
Though sprung from pride, he, to appear, declines;  
At others, shining merit he repines:  
And like the giant, whom great Jove, in ire,  
O'erwhelm'd with whirlwinds of tempestuous fire;  
Who, while he panting lay, and raved below,  
Strove to hurl back the flames against his foe.  
At length he raved, imprison'd under ground,  
And efforts made to shake earth's pits profound;  
Heaved against Ætna, which his bosom press'd;  
Ætna fell back, he was again oppress'd.  
I oft have courtiers known, the dupes of fame,  
Ready to burst at Villars' glorious name.  
The arm they hated, which in fight prevail'd;

He fought for them, and they against him rail'd.  
Justly a hero once to Louis said,  
Taking the field, "Versailles alone I dread :  
Defend me from my countrymen, I go  
Fearless in distant realms to fight the foe."  
What anguish feels the mind from envy's blast?  
In public joy it is with grief o'ercast.  
Ye tasteless guests, to you fine food seems vile;  
To poison 'tis converted by the bile.  
Oh, ye who take the road that leads to fame,  
Must none besides you travel in the same?  
Must each competitor incur your hate?  
Would you those Eastern monarchs emulate,  
Who make the slavish Asiatics groan,  
And cannot bear a brother near the throne?  
When at the play-house some enticing bill  
Makes love of novelty the play-house fill;  
When in Alzira or Zenobia's part,  
Pathetic Gaussin touches every heart;  
Or when Dufresne<sup>1</sup> like thunder shakes the stage,  
In acting Orasmanes' jealous rage,  
Tears at each stroke bedew the hearer's eyes,  
Tears which from truest satisfaction rise :  
The jealous Rufus hangs his drooping head,  
Their joy constrains him tears of rage to shed.  
If this distinction frail, O wretch forlorn!  
If others' bliss thy envious heart has torn,  
Of this vexation try thyself to avail,  
And strive, by dint of merit, to prevail.  
*The Haughty Man*<sup>2</sup> draws crowds on every night;

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<sup>1</sup> Dufresne, a celebrated actor at Paris; Mademoiselle Gaussin, a very graceful actress, who played Zaire the first time the tragedy of that name was represented.

<sup>2</sup> *Le Glorieux*, a comedy of Mons. Destouches.

Does this afflict thee? Better strive to write.  
 But if to please the audience you intend,  
 No more *capricious Sires*<sup>1</sup> to Paris send;  
 Nor set each odious face the fool to play,  
 In coarsest colors robb'd from Rabelais.  
 The burlesque writer few know how to bear,  
 Whose modern muse assumes a Gothic air,  
 And in some verse, which antique guise displays,  
 Conceals his dulness by old Marot's phrase.  
 This style I would not in a tale reject,  
 But truth requires a tone of more respect.  
 A sinner wouldst thou to repentance call?  
 Bigot, mix honey with thy sermon's gall:  
 Assuming the instructor's arduous task,  
 Thou ape of virtue, take a better mask:  
 If rival of some eminent divine,  
 Envy him not; endeavor to outshine;  
 Raise higher trophies to make his seem low:  
 Orpheus alone should dare to hiss Rameau;  
 Venus to criticise is Psyche's right;  
 But why should we in censure thus delight?  
 No beauty she acquires who blames a face;  
 Was Bayle e'er hurt by the caballing race?  
 Though furious Jurieu aim'd prophetic lies  
 At Bayle, he's still respected by the wise:  
 Fanatic Jurieu,<sup>2</sup> who 'gainst Bayle declaim'd,

<sup>1</sup> *Les âieux chimériques* was a comedy of Rousseau's, which so disgusted the audience that they would not suffer it to be acted through.

<sup>2</sup> Jurieu was a Protestant minister, who raved at Bayle and good sense; he wrote like a fool, and counterfeited the prophet. He foretold that France should undergo revolutions which never happened. It is universally known that Bayle was one of the greatest men that France ever produced. The parliament of Toulouse showed him a great mark of distinction in ratifying his will, which, according to strict law, should have been set aside, as that of a Huguenot; it was declared valid, as the will of a

Is by the public with abhorrence named.  
An author often prostitutes his art,  
Descending to the slanderer's low part.  
He helps the levees of the great to fill,  
Still ready his vile malice to distil :  
Impiety's reproach he casts on all  
Whoe'er maintains this planet is a ball,  
Or says that the ecliptic with the line  
An angle makes ; they have some curs'd design.  
Malebranche is Spinosist, and Locke's Essay,  
With Epicurus' errors, leads astray.  
Pope is a reprobate, whose impious pen  
Presumes to show God's clemency to men ;  
An impious heathen, who attempts to show  
That God loves all ; that all is good below.<sup>1</sup>  
He is a wretch, indeed, who still for pelf  
Damns others, and would almost damn himself ;  
Who lets his venal, prostituted page,  
And to the highest bidder sells his rage :  
A sat'rist who resents satiric strains,  
Whose dulness tires, who of the dull complains,  
Who cries true taste is now from Paris flown,  
Which no one's works prove better than his own.  
In Boileau we excuse satiric rage,  
Some beauties please in the malignant page.  
That bee had honey to assuage the grief  
Of those he stung, and give some kind relief.  
But the unprofitable, stupid drone,

---

man who had enlightened the world, and been an honor to his country. The edict was published upon the report of Mons. Senaux, counsellor of that parliament.

<sup>1</sup> Plato's optimism, renewed by Shaftesbury, Bolingbroke, Leibnitz, and chanted by Pope in harmonious verse, is perhaps a false, but surely not an impious system, as calumniators have said.



Who lives by doing dirty work alone,  
 All will to crush the hated insect try,  
 At once disgusting to the ear and eye.  
 How great your frenzy, rash and envious band,  
 Ye rival painters, whose presumptuous hand  
 Dared the French Zeuxis' picture to deface,<sup>1</sup>  
 Within those walls that Bruno still retrace.  
 His pencil thus a new renown acquired,  
 The torn remains by all were more admired;  
 New lustre is reflected on his name,  
 You are consign'd to infamy and shame.  
 Men should so low, so mean a vice detest;  
 A critic nobly once his sense express'd,  
 When mighty Richelieu strove, but strove in vain,  
 To villify Corneille's immortal strain;  
 Less bold than Chapelain, he the task declined,  
 Defects in such a noble work to find.  
 With generous rage thus envy he opposed—  
 "Would that my genius had the work composed."<sup>2</sup>  
 At Colbert's voice Bernini came from Rome,  
 But stood enraptured at our Perrault's<sup>3</sup> dome.  
 "If France," cried he, "has genius so sublime,  
 Why have men called me from the Latian clime."  
 'Tis merit others' merit thus to own,  
 To a true genius envy is unknown.  
 What pleasure from a generous temper flows!  
 How great to say with truth, "I have no foes!  
 In every brother's welfare I take part,  
 We're all united by one common art."  
 'Tis thus the earth with joy sees woods arise,

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<sup>1</sup> Some painters, jealous of Le Sueur's reputation, spoiled and defaced his pictures at the Carthusian convent.

<sup>2</sup> Habert de Cerisi of the Academy.

<sup>3</sup> Alluding to the façade of the old Louvre, designed by Perrault.

Whose oak or fir trees seem to threat the skies;  
By the sap's circulating juice they're fed,  
Each root is deep as hell, in heaven each head.  
The force of winds their solid trunks assails,  
They bend, and the fierce tempest's fury fails.  
Secure they flourish by each other's aid,  
And over time itself triumphs the shade.  
War at their feet the hissing serpents wage,  
And the stain'd roots bear witness to their rage.

## DISSERTATION IV.

UPON MODERATION IN ALL THINGS, STUDY, AMBITION, AND  
PLEASURE.

TO M. HELVETIUS.

Fools, by excess, make varied pleasures pall;  
True moderation is the wise man's all;  
Pleasure and business to combine he knows,  
And makes joy terminate in due repose.  
To all things no one mortal can aspire;  
From early youth to know was your desire;  
Nature's your book, you strive with curious eye  
In nature more than others to descry,  
Guided by reason nature try to sound,  
But set to curiosity a bound.  
Stop on infinity's dread verge your course,  
And pry not into nature's awful source;  
Réaumur and Buffon, who, with piercing sight,  
Athwart her veil discern'd truth's sacred light,  
Cannot by philosophic process state  
The wondrous laws by which plants vegetate.  
Was it e'er known to the profoundest sage,  
Why panthers, tigers, and why aspics rage?  
Wherefore to man the dog still lifts his eyes,  
And licks his master's hand before he dies?  
Why on a hundred legs, with motion slow,  
Does yonder insect ever trembling go?  
Why does the reptile, which entomb'd now lies,  
Revive, ere long, and with new body rise?

Why does it, crown'd like flame, ascending spring,  
 And in the air expand its gorgeous wing?  
 Can e'en du Faï,<sup>1</sup> whose head with plants is fill'd,  
 Du Faï in vegetables deeply skill'd,  
 Tell why yon plant, as 't were of sense possess'd,  
 Shrinks from the touch, however gently press'd?  
 Languid with sickness, on your bed reclined,  
 From Sylva's eloquence relief you find;  
 He makes the tortured patient cease to groan,  
 To him the happy art to please is known.  
 Can Sylva's self the economy explain  
 Which works digestion, and makes food sustain?  
 How, changed to milk, the food digested flows,  
 How, by degrees, 'tis filtrated, and goes  
 To pour into my veins a purple tide,  
 By which both strength and spirits are supplied—  
 Which makes the pulse of life incessant beat,  
 And in the brain fix deathless reason's seat?  
 Lost in amaze, he lifts to heaven his eye,  
 And bids you for the truth to God apply.  
 Return, Maupertuis, to these realms of light,  
 From realms where, half the year, day's hid in night;  
 You,<sup>2</sup> who alone the praise of Newton share,  
 Who know the truth, the truth to man declare.  
 You who forego, in search of knowledge, ease,  
 Who traverse mountains, and who pass the seas,  
 Who can the mind and body's toil sustain,  
 Who can our planet's figure ascertain,

---

<sup>1</sup> M. du Faï was superintendent of the Royal Garden and Cabinet of Natural History, which had been very much neglected before he undertook the care of it; and which was afterwards so much improved by Buffon, that it became the admiration of strangers. There are cabinets in Europe richer in some parts, but none so complete.

<sup>2</sup> Messieurs Maupertuis, Clairaut, La Monnier, went to Tornea, in 1736, to measure a degree of the meridian, and brought back two Laps.

Who scan all nature's laws with minds profound,  
And e'en attraction's hidden cause expound—  
Tell me, ye men to whom all things seem known,  
How, seated on his everlasting throne,  
The Great First Mover can at will control  
Those orbs which in the heavens incessant roll,  
Direct their motions, make them gravitate  
Towards each other with responsive weight?  
Why towards the sun is this our nether world  
For ever pull'd, and round its axis hurl'd?  
Why in twelve years does Jove the heavens go round,  
Why of his days is ten hours' space the bound?  
These subtle disquisitions all are vain—  
Man measures heaven, but nature can't explain.  
Thus by sure art, and by perspective's law,  
You may the front of some proud palace draw,  
Its architecture's to the eye reveal'd,  
The inside of the structure is conceal'd.  
Why should I grieve, then, if my feeble sight  
Cannot pierce through this veil of darkest night?  
I would not, like Empedocles, aspire  
To know the nature of famed *Ætna's* fire,  
Who to walk o'er sulphureous vaults presumed;  
Who fire would know, and was by fire consumed.  
Let then ambition's sallies be repress—  
Ambition, ruling passion of the breast!  
The farmer-general rude, the magistrate  
Who struts with the imperious airs of state,  
All these to court, contempt to suffer, go,  
Contempt which they to all at Paris show.  
E'en bards sometimes, urged on by *Phœbus'* flame,  
Have been deluded by that phantom fame:  
Plato was *Dionysius'* humble guest,  
Louis Racine, turn'd Jansenist, caress'd.

Horace, in loose and prostituted lays,  
A wanton sung, and sold Octavius praise.  
At court, these pawn'd integrity for gain,  
But opulence and ease made light their chain.  
Horace, the sage, with affluence lived blest :  
Who grasps at all, is sure to be distress.  
E'en I, renouncing what I first profess'd,  
Lived, I avow, by royalty caress'd.  
My ship had founder'd in these siren waves,  
Bewitch'd in sense, and fetter'd as their slaves.  
"I love thee," they did cry ; I, fool, believed  
The empty word some essence real conceived.  
Ensnared, in vain desire to please I plied  
The manly freedom that is all my pride,  
And losing reason, my true armor bright,  
Thought that a subject could a king delight.  
How have I mourn'd me of this error drear !  
Scarcely had I enter'd on the court's career,  
My soul enlighten'd, open to regret,  
Sigh'd only for the means to break the net.  
Ye reasoning men, and ye who think to be,  
Would you live happy, live forever free.  
Ye who have introduced in Gallia's court  
All Sybaris' luxury and wanton sport,  
Who, on the downy bed of ease reclined,  
To sensual joys devote your drunken mind—  
Ye madmen, who would pleasure thus pursue,  
Learn how to know it, and enjoy it too !  
Pleasures are flowers which the hand of God  
Rears mid the thorns that spring upon our road ;  
Each has its season, and with moderate care,  
May serve the winter of our life to cheer.  
They must be pluck'd, howe'er, with fingers light,  
For frail's their form, like breath their hues so bright.



Present not to your senses, when they fail,  
All the perfumes which Flora can exhale;  
Let us not strive of all joys to partake,  
But let us pleasure quit, for pleasure's sake :  
Who labors hard, true pleasure still obtains ;  
I pity him whom indolence enchains.  
True wisdom yields true happiness below,  
On earth no harvests without culture grow :  
Good, by unwearied pains, must here be sought,  
Success by industry alone is bought.  
Behold Brossoret,<sup>1</sup> critic in nice fare,  
To supper from the opera repair !  
Pleasure in luxury he hopes to find,  
But vapors still o'ercast his clouded mind.  
His soul o'erwhelm'd, no rays of light pervade,  
He sleeps supine in dark oblivion's shade ;  
He grasps at joy, to rapture he aspires  
In vain ; he's dead to pleasure and desires.  
Caress'd by ease, officious and o'er-kind,  
Pleasure long since on sloth's soft lap reclined :  
Love, music, poetry, no more could please,  
Man was enslaved by indolence and ease.  
But God, in pity to man's helpless kind,  
Labor with pleasure, joy with pain combined.  
Awaked by fear, man strives his bliss to gain ;  
Toil ever follows in fair pleasure's train.  
To charm by novelty be still your care ;  
I speak to you, young lovers, and the fair.  
Subdued by sense, and by delusions vain,  
Damon, the hoped-for bliss you can't obtain.  
You think, by Daphne's charms with love inspired,

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<sup>1</sup> He was a counsellor to parliament, very rich—a voluptuous man, who lived sumptuously. The early editions have *Lucullus*.

You ne'er can of her company be tired.  
But transports last not in the human heart,  
In time with transport you'll agree to part.  
Who hope in constant converse bliss to find  
Must greatly soar above the vulgar mind.  
Such joy may be by souls superior sought,  
From caprice free, with every virtue fraught;  
Who live in friendship must in worth excel;  
In hearts corrupted, friendship cannot dwell.  
Friendship divine! thy influence we bless,  
With thee we find a virtue in excess.  
Blest friendship, shielded by thy heavenly power,  
New joys I taste each season, and each hour.  
Man by himself forlorn, if you assist,  
By force of love in others can exist.  
The good man's idol, passion of the sage,  
Friendship, thy name shall consecrate my page;  
Govern my heart, and o'er my verse preside,  
Inspired by thee, to bliss I'll mortals guide.

## DISSERTATION V.

### UPON THE NATURE OF PLEASURE.<sup>1</sup>

How long shall bigots, by false zeal grown rude,  
All human kind from Paradise exclude?  
To virtue mortals shall they then excite  
By sermons which fair virtue e'en affright?  
Shall preachers, then, in Calvin's footsteps tread,  
Who thinks God, like himself, by anger led?  
Some tyrant minister, elate and proud,  
I see, methinks, amid a slavish crowd,  
Dictate, with savage air, what rage inspires;  
A milder government my soul requires.  
Now Timon thinks he leads a perfect life,  
Since he's regardless of its joys and strife.  
Poor Timon, thou forget'st (ah! heed my plaint)  
To be a man ere thou becom'st a saint.  
I praise God's mercy, I revere his law—  
Approach him, mortals, gratefully adore.  
Hark, how you're call'd by Nature's voice benign,  
Through joys and pleasures to the Power Divine!  
The treasures of his wisdom ne'er were known—  
Matter by motion he directs alone;  
But man by pleasure to conduct he knows;  
Learn to enjoy the bliss his hand bestows.  
Pleasure existence gives to human kind,

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<sup>1</sup> This poem turns entirely upon the impossibility of man's having any sensations entirely his own. All our sensations prove a God, and all our agreeable sensations prove a benevolent God.

It actuates body, and inspires the mind.  
Whether soft slumbers close your weary eyes,  
Or morn to rouse you gilds the orient skies ;  
Or if, by hunger prest, you seek for fare,  
The painful waste of labor to repair ;  
Or if impell'd by love two hearts combine  
To frame a being to prolong their line ;  
In every circumstance, the Power Supreme  
Can sweeten wants with pleasure's softest dream.  
Man is impell'd to act by joy alone ;  
All other motives are to him unknown.  
Did not our souls alluring pleasure draw,  
Who would submit to Hymen's rigid law ?  
What beauty would not sorely curse her doom,  
Condemn'd a child to carry in her womb,  
To bear excruciating pangs and throes,  
An infant nurse, and feel a mother's woes,  
His wayward imbecility to shield,  
And after to his youthful sallies yield ?  
Enjoying pleasures in each state and hour,  
Mortals acknowledge God's eternal power.  
But wherefore, said I, in your joys alone ?  
Even in your woes God's wisdom is made known.  
That sense so quick of danger and of harm,  
That guard, forever prompt to take the alarm,  
Cries out incessantly, of hurt beware,  
Defend your lives, preserve your health with care !  
No quarter self-love can with zealots find,  
They style it hell-born foe to human kind.  
Wretches, traduce not of God's gifts the best,  
Love comes from heaven, God means to make us blest.  
From self to sons, to countrymen, descends  
Our love ; but most of all, we love our friends.  
Love like a soul can e'en our souls inspire,

And make them soar to heaven on wings of fire.  
God gives to man, at once severe and kind,  
Passions<sup>1</sup> to raise to noble deeds the mind.  
They're dangerous gifts, although 'twas Heaven that gave;  
Abuse destroys, but prudent use can save.  
I pity not that mortal, but admire,  
Who knows to check by reason each desire;  
Who, shunning man, to God devotes his mind,  
Nor asks to know perfidious human kind;  
Who, loving God with all his heart and might,  
Shuns lawful pleasures for more high delight.  
If of his cross he's proud, of fasting vain,  
Yet still in secret weary of his pain—  
If he condemns the world from which he fled,  
Rails at all ties, and at the marriage-bed;  
We do not in such pride and rancor trace  
The friend of God, but foe to human race;  
Through his chagrin and oft-exciting spleen,  
Regret of pleasure he foregoes is seen.  
Heaven, which bestow'd on every man a heart,

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<sup>1</sup> As most of the words of a language may be explained in more than one sense, it may not be improper to apprise the reader, that by the word *passions* he should understand strong desires which continue for any length of time, whatever be the nature of the good which they aim at. The word is derived from the Latin verb *patior*, to suffer, because no desire is unattended with pain; to desire the possession of any thing good is to feel its absence, and the first step towards pleasure is the assuaging of that pain. The virtuous and the vicious are equally subject to those lively and continued desires which go by the name of passions. They are never vices but when rendered so by their object: a man's desire to succeed in his profession, conjugal love, parental affection, a taste for the sciences, are passions, though there is nothing criminal in them. It were to be wished that language could afford us words to express those habitual desires which are in themselves indifferent, those which are virtuous, and those which are blamable; but there is not a language in the world which has terms capable of conveying all our ideas; and men are under a necessity of using the same word in different acceptations, just as the same tool is frequently used in works of a different nature.

To animate it, must desires impart.  
The modern stoic would each wish control,  
And of its very essence rob my soul.  
His doctrine is, that God of us would make  
Such use as jealous Mussulmen, awake  
To safety of their honor from disgrace,  
Do of poor eunuchs—outcasts of our race.  
You, who at nature level all your rage,  
Have you not read the ancient's moral page ?  
In Peleus' daughters, Peleus worn and old,  
As in a glass your folly you behold.  
They thought both time and nature to subdue,  
And youthful vigor in their sire renew :  
They slew, and left him weltering in his gore,  
Hoping the while life's freshness to restore.  
Stoics, herein behold your frightful form—  
Ye murder nature, striving to reform.  
From use of good, felicity must rise,  
Ruin from its abuse ; so say the wise.  
In abstinence shun not Petronius less  
Than Epictetus in his dire excess.  
Fatal to happiness is either scheme ;  
Bliss never yet was found in the extreme.  
Disclaimer subtle,<sup>1</sup> I don't therefore say,  
That man to all his passions should give way ;  
I would this fiery courser's speed restrain,  
And stem this torrent pouring o'er the plain,  
Its headlong rage by banks and dams command,  
Nor suffer it to overflow my land.  
Winds, purify the air, no tempest raise ;  
Scorch us not, sun, but light with kindly rays !

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<sup>1</sup> This applies only to those ultra writers who would deprive men of all sentiment.



God, to all beings that exist, a friend,  
Thy care to instincts which thou gav'st, extend.  
The taste of friendship, social tie of hearts,  
The love of study, solitude, and arts—  
These are my passions; at all times my mind  
Could in their charms attractive comfort find.  
When on the banks of Maine two rogues in place,  
Who often broke the laws of human race;  
When two commission'd thieves, by avarice led,  
Upon me all their rage malignant shed;  
Then learnèd ease was my delight alone,  
I cultivated arts to them unknown.  
'Twas thus Jove's son his cares with music eased  
His lowing herds when wily Cacus seized.  
He still continued his harmonious strain,  
Thieves strove to interrupt the song in vain.  
That man is born to a propitious fate,  
Who to the Muse his time can dedicate;  
He from the tuneful art derives repose,  
The Muse his anger soothes, dispels his woes:  
He laughs at all the follies of mankind,  
And in his lyre a sure relief can find.



## DISSERTATION VI.

### UPON THE NATURE OF MAN.

VIRTUE presides still over your delights,  
And me, too, by the charm of verse invites.  
Your study's man; that labyrinth you explore;  
Your guide the clue of wisdom's sacred lore.  
Ashamed of ignorance, to study man  
I strive; myself, my being I would scan:  
To satire, Pascal and Boileau inclined,  
Have dipt their pen in gall and lash'd mankind.  
Leibnitz and Pope, at once both learn'd and sage,  
Observe a medium in their moral page;  
Wisely the latent tracts of man explore,  
And to the Deity sublimely soar.  
But Nature's ways they strove to find in vain,  
Man is a riddle man cannot explain;  
Upon the subject all their wit have shown,  
But still the riddle's sense remains unknown.  
By prostitutes, I know, and rakes profest,  
The disquisition's treated as a jest.  
At supper some lewd verses read aloud,  
Which charm the sprightly, gay, unthinking crowd.  
But study pleases when our mirth is past;  
Reason succeeds to witty jests at last.  
Upon ourselves we turn a curious eye,  
And into our own nature strive to pry:  
Thought is to those who live in crowds unknown,  
We seriously reflect when left alone.

With you I fain would soar on wisdom's wing  
From this vile world to its Eternal King.  
That wondrous chain discover, if you can,  
Which links the heavens with earth, with angels man ;  
That world of beings subjects to one law,  
Which Plato and which Pope in fancy saw.  
In vain you press me, such a great design  
My genius must in silent awe decline :  
Gallic correctness all my flights restrains,  
Ours are not free like Greek or British strains.  
'Tis Pope's to speak, I am to silence bound ;  
Bachelors of Bourges may mysteries expound.  
I've taken no degree, nor will engage  
In fierce debate, or war polemic wage.  
Hear a recital with instruction fraught,  
Which by Fourmont<sup>1</sup> may be a fable thought ;  
But which I in a Chinese author found  
Translated by a Jesuit profound.  
A mouse did once thus to another say :  
"O'er what a noble empire bear we sway !  
This palace' deep foundations erst were laid  
For us, for us by God these holes were made.  
See you those hams in yon vault closely pent ?  
By God they thither for our use were sent.  
Those hills of bacon, an unfailing store,  
Shall last for us till time shall be no more.  
A mouse, great God, the Sages all declare  
Creation's end : a work beyond compare !  
Vicious are cats, to eat us much inclined ;  
Yet only so from vice to win our kind."  
Not far a multitude of geese are seen,

---

<sup>1</sup> A man deeply versed in the history of China, as well as in the Chinese language.

Drawn up near woods and streams upon the green ;  
Of pamper'd turkeys troops that strut in state,  
And flocks that bend beneath their fleeces' weight ;  
They cried : " The universe is ours alone ;  
Whatever the Almighty made, we own."  
In the clear watery image, while he grazed,  
The ass his beauty saw, and was amazed.  
He cries : " For asses God has made the earth,  
Man still attends me, he's my slave from birth ;  
He curries, washes me, and, more to please,  
Builds my seraglio, for my joys purveys,  
And happy to procure me soft delight,  
Brings a she-ass to crown my bliss at night :  
Often I laugh to see the haughty slave  
Bring me the gift which Heaven kindly gave."  
Man came the next, his plea was much the same ;  
He cried : " Heaven, earth, and elements I claim :  
To waft me, ocean rolls and winds arise ;  
To give me light, stars glitter in the skies ;  
Night's argent globe through heaven's clear azure glides,  
Increases, wanes, and o'er the stars presides ;  
O'er all presides my vast, capacious mind,  
In the wide universe too close confined :  
But though I'm oracle and master here,  
I should be raised to a more glorious sphere."  
The angels then, who in high heaven control  
The wandering orbs, and teach them how to roll,  
Exclaim'd, while at their will they moved each ball :  
" God for our pleasure has created all."  
Then earth with pity and with scorn they eyed,  
And laugh'd at mortals and at human pride.  
Their secret thoughts were all to Tien<sup>1</sup> known ;

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<sup>1</sup> God is called by this name in the Chinese language.

He summon'd them before the eternal throne :  
Each varied being, angel, beast, and man,  
All that compose the Almighty's wondrous plan.  
"You are my creatures—all; I call you mine :  
You bear," said he, "my character divine ;  
To me you all, as to your centre, tend ;  
For me you all were made, on me depend :  
I rule at once o'er Nature, Time, and Fate—  
By me each being is assign'd its state.  
Imperfect creatures! you aspire in vain ;  
In your own stations, satisfied, remain."  
Man still was discontented with his place,  
Still at their lot repined the human race.  
A learn'd Chinese, grown old in fierce dispute,  
Who reason could by argument confute,  
With old Confucius' logic quite possess'd,  
In form, to God presented his request :  
"Why is my time a second? Why my space  
A point? Why falls so soon the human race?  
Why am not I a hundred cubits high?  
Why can't I travel swiftly through the sky?  
Why can't I teach the erring moon her way?  
Why am not I awake both night and day?  
Why can't I prove, inflamed by amorous fire,  
In one month, of a hundred sons the sire?  
Why, in one day, does all my ardor cease?"  
"Your questions, said the god, you might increase :  
But I am certain that you'll doubt no more,  
When you, for truth, the ideal world explore."  
Even then an angel bore him from the place,  
Far as the centre of unbounded space ;  
O'er suns, which circling planets still surround,  
Moons, rings, and comets, which no limits bound :  
A globe he enter'd, where the hand divine



Of nature's God had traced his great design ;  
 The eye can there each real system scan,  
 And of each system possible the plan.  
 Now animating hopes the sage inspire,  
 He seeks a world made to his heart's desire.  
 He sought in vain ; the angel made him know,  
 That what he wish'd could ne'er exist below ;  
 For could man, giant-like, with heaven engage,  
 Or rather war against right reason wage,  
 Had God extended in his earthly sphere  
 His life up to a twenty-thousandth year,  
 This mass of earth and water ne'er could find  
 Room for the overgrown, gigantic kind.  
 Reasons like these the caviller confound,  
 He owns each being has its proper bound ;  
 That 'tis a folly to aspire below,  
 Since life and pleasure both their limits know ;  
 That man should not of grief or toil complain,  
 And less of death, which frees him from his chain :  
 That he should not fatigue the heavenly throne,  
 Since to the Almighty change was never known.  
 Convinced, not satisfied, the sage his flight  
 Bent to the earth, and own'd that all is right ;  
 But still he murmur'd, midst the earthly throng,  
 A doctor never can be in the wrong ;  
 More flexible was Matthew Garo's mind,<sup>1</sup>  
 God for all things to praise, his soul inclined.  
 Perhaps God erst on men more wealth bestow'd,  
 Perhaps their plains with milk and honey flow'd ;  
 The night, perhaps, was lightsome as the day,

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<sup>1</sup> See la Fontaine's fable, *The Acorn and the Pumpkin* (Book ix. 4).

"En louant Dieu de toute chose

Garo retourne à la maison."

Yet Garo is answered in the *Questions sur l'Encyclopédie*.

And winter bloom'd with all the flowers of May ;  
While man, the king of earth, in peace retired,  
Wrapt up in self, himself alone admired.  
But let us rest contented with our fate,  
Our bliss is suited to our present state.  
Against our Maker murmurs must prove vain,  
Mortals should not the laws of God arraign :  
Let us to serve him all our lives employ,  
And gratefully the bliss he gives enjoy.  
If to two days the Almighty had confined  
The time allotted to all human kind,  
We should to God those two short days consign,  
And consecrate the time to love divine.  
He who assiduous every call attends,  
Never complains that life too quickly ends.  
Much might one live in very little space,  
As I good proof of this will bring apace ;  
But authors should not to instruct aspire :  
Who speaks too much is ever sure to tire.  
Thus did my Muse, in simple, artless strain,  
And various tones, strive nature to explain ;  
While France's sons, in nature's tablets wise,  
At Quito hoped to see new stars arise ;  
While Clairaut and Maupertuis, mid the snow,  
The Laps amazed by what our children know ;  
While rival of the old Prometheus' fame,  
Vaucanson brings to man celestial flame,  
Boldly to copy nature's self aspires,  
And bodies animates with heavenly fires.  
Remote from cities, on Parnassus' shore  
I pass'd my days, intent on learnèd lore ;  
And from the sphere where Milton, unconfined,  
At pleasure roved, where pierced great Newton's mind,  
I saw them soar, with emulation fired,

Genius sublime and arts my soul admired ;  
Slanderers in me beheld their foe profess'd ;  
Fanatics wild, informers I detest ;  
I know no envy, or perfidious art,  
I worship God with pure and upright heart ;  
And though my body's with diseases spent,  
My active mind on study is intent ;  
I live convinced that while we here remain,  
To hope for perfect happiness is vain.



## DISSERTATION VII.<sup>1</sup>

### UPON TRUE VIRTUE.

VIRTUE's a word well known, at least, 'twould seem :  
Of stage, bar, pulpit, it is e'er the theme ;  
The royal palace therewith daily rings,  
And e'en 'tis heard upon the lips of kings.  
Sweet word, to which the ear all gladly lend,  
Easy to speak, but hard to comprehend :  
Deceived are we, and ever we deceive.  
False coins we utter, genuine believe ;  
Build schemes to cheat which seem without a flaw,  
And cheat ourselves, as did the rascal Law.

What's virtue? Brutus—so the tale e'er ran—  
Regretted that he was an honest man.  
“Virtue,” said he, “is nothing but a name.”  
Zeno's old school, of very doubtful fame,  
Insensibility as virtue rates.  
The frantic dervis of Levantine States,  
With eyes and arms upturn'd, will God adore,  
And his illuminating grace implore ;  
And in Mahomet's name, then dancing round,  
Believe that virtue's summit he has found.

With cord about his loins, and aspect bold,  
See yonder hermit, ignorant and old,

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<sup>1</sup> This Dissertation was, at first, addressed to Racine the younger, author of the poem on Grace.

Twanging, behind a desk of ancient style,  
A hundred Hebrew psalms in Latin vile.  
May Heaven bless his piety profound!  
But to whose profit will it all redound?  
He may be good; what has his goodness wrought?  
Good for one's self alone is good for naught.

When the Great Chastener of priests and scribes,  
Was unto Pilate led mid taunts and gibes,  
With insolence, call'd dignity, forsooth,  
The haughty Roman ask'd him: "What is truth?"  
Though able to instruct, or to confound,  
The God-man, in reply, deign'd not a sound.  
His silence eloquent too plainly said:  
This long-sought truth for us was never made.  
But when, enkindled by a heavenly ray,  
A simple townsman met him in the way,  
And like a good disciple sought to know  
The state of man, man's duty here below,  
For man's good willing aught should be reveal'd,  
He who knew all things then his lips unseal'd,  
And, in such words as come but from above,  
"Love God," said He, "your neighbor also love."  
Behold God's law! 'tis all we can demand;  
What he requires is summ'd in one command.  
The world is vain, 'gainst Heaven in constant war,  
To fly is well, to serve it better far.  
Oh, would that man might for his fellow live!

Madden'd fanatic, whither dost thou drive?  
Why this strange look, this pallid, hollow face?  
These starts convulsive,<sup>1</sup> this unsteady pace?

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<sup>1</sup> The Convulsionists.



Against a wicked age thy wrath to pour,  
Thou glidest softly to yon upper floor,  
Where bigots like thyself, in conclave sad,  
In God's praise shout and swear, and, still more mad,  
Pretended readings of the future make,  
And miracles by hundreds undertake.  
To them the blind man comes expecting sight,  
And, praying, homeward goes, still blind as night.  
The cripple, credulous, leaps 'neath their touch,  
But falls, yet sings, and goes home on his crutch.  
The deaf man listens with a vacant look,  
Yet nothing hears; and these deluded folk  
By zealots duped, by false tales overjoy'd,  
Preach that the world is soon to be destroy'd.

This mystery has noble charms, I know;  
And saints have pleasures which to me ne'er flow.  
For miracles are good; but from distress  
To draw a friend, relieve his wretchedness,  
To give a hand to one by vice deform'd,  
Are greater miracles, no more perform'd.

Now, here's a judge call'd honest and severe;  
His soul is never moved by love or fear,  
He makes men toward his office hatred feel,  
And wretches out of duty and through zeal.  
Save some importunate, but to beguile,  
Did he e'er look on merit with a smile,  
Select it in the crowd, aid cheerfully  
The man whose only fault was modesty?  
To some poor knaves he may have justice shown!  
Impartiality alone is naught;  
Some faithful service with it should be wrought.  
The just man's kind. Historians relate

That once an odious premier of the State,  
Thus to the king despotic counsel gave :  
“Timante is no good Catholic ; the knave  
Has Calvin’s Bible often in his hand !  
You should such sin suppress by your command ;  
Imprison him, or into exile send.”  
“Timante helps me my kingdom to defend,”  
The king replied ; “you tell me where he’s weak,  
But of his toil for me you do not speak !”  
The equitable prudence of this king  
Paints virtue better far than any thing.

Among the virtuous would you be enroll’d ?  
Your gentleness and prudence all behold ;  
You preach mere feeling, aim alone to charm,  
Too weak to serve, too indolent to harm ;  
An honest, lazy man, you love your ease,  
And, neither good nor bad, live but to please.  
No ; ’tis the title of a noble heart  
That guards his friend against a foeman’s art.  
Thy claim thereto, Pellisson, none contend,  
Who Fouquet in thy prison didst defend !  
I thank thee, Heaven, whose goodness never fail’d  
To send me friends when bitterly assail’d,  
Courageous friends, whose arms were ne’er at fault  
In bold repelling of the sharp assault  
Of fierce fanatics, critics full of gall,  
Of ministers abused, abusing all,  
Of petty tyrants, proud of their estate,  
And whom my freedom served to irritate.  
With such, for more than forty years in strife,  
True, virtuous friends have e’er consoled my life.  
Their constancy and zeal I’ve strived to earn,  
Some ingrates made, have not been one, in turn.

A legislator,<sup>1</sup> who employ'd his pen  
In endless projects for the good of men,  
And who for thirty years, unthank'd, has wrought,  
Presents a word, by Vaugelas not taught :  
This word's *beneficence* ; I like it well,  
For here, in union, all the virtues dwell.  
Ye small grammarians, sages among fools,  
Who weigh all speech and measure words by rules !  
This may to you a random word appear,  
But all the world will cherish the idea.

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<sup>1</sup> The Abbé Saint-Pierre.



A POEM

UPON

THE LAW OF NATURE.

WITH PREFACES, NOTES, ETC.





P R E F A C E

TO THE

POEM UPON THE LAW OF NATURE.

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It is generally known that this poem was not intended for the public; it remained three years a secret between a great king<sup>1</sup> and the author. About three months ago, a few copies were handed about at Paris, and, soon after, several editions of it were published, as incorrect as those of other works by the same hand.

It would be no more than justice to be more indulgent to a work forced out of the obscurity to which the author had condemned it, than to a work offered by the writer himself to the inspection of the public. It would likewise be agreeable to equity not to pass the same judgment upon a poem composed by a layman, as upon a theological thesis. These two poems<sup>2</sup> are the fruits of a transplanted tree. Some of these fruits may, perhaps, not be to the taste of certain persons; they come from a foreign climate, but none of them are poisoned, and many of them may prove highly salutary.

This work should be considered as a letter, in which the author freely discovers his sentiments. Most books resemble those formal and general conversations, in which people seldom utter their thoughts. The author in this poem declares his

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<sup>1</sup> Frederic II, king of Prussia.

<sup>2</sup> This and the poem on the Earthquake at Lisbon.

real opinions to a philosophical prince, with whom he then had the honor of living. He has been informed that persons of the best understanding have been pleased with this sketch; they were of opinion that the poem upon the Law of Nature was intended only to prepare the world for truths more sublime. This consideration alone would have induced the author to render his work more complete and correct, had his infirmities permitted. He was, at last, obliged to content himself with correcting the faults with which the first edition swarms.

The praises bestowed in this work upon a prince, by no means solicitous about praise, should not surprise anybody; they came from the heart; they are very different from that incense which self-interestedness lavishes upon power. The man of letters might not, perhaps, have deserved the praises or the favors poured upon him by the monarch; but the monarch was every way deserving of the encomiums bestowed upon him in this poem by the man of letters. The change which has since happened, in a connection which does so much honor to literature, has by no means altered the sentiments which gave occasion to these praises.

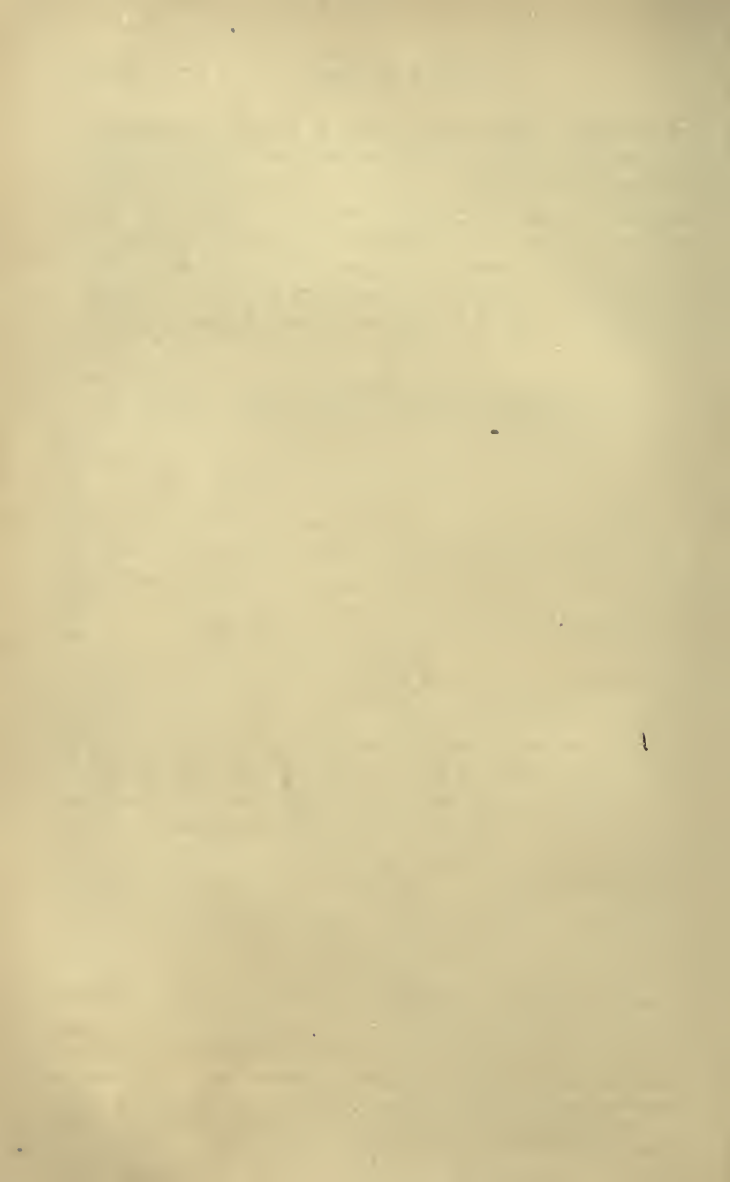
In fine, since a work never intended for publication has been snatched out of secrecy and obscurity, it will last among a few sages as a monument of a philosophical correspondence, which should not have ended; and if it shows human weakness throughout, it, at the same time, makes it appear that true philosophy always surmounts that weakness.

To conclude, this feeble essay was first occasioned by a little pamphlet which appeared at that time. It was entitled "A Treatise upon the Sovereign Good," and it should have been called "A Treatise upon the Sovereign Evil." The author of it maintained that there is no such thing as virtue or vice; and that remorse of conscience is a weakness owing to the prejudice of education, which a man should endeavor to subdue. The author of the following poem maintains, that remorse of conscience is as natural to us as any passion of the human soul. If the violence of passion hurries man into a fault, when come to himself he is sensible of that fault. The wild girl who

was found near Chalons,<sup>1</sup> owned that, in her passion, she gave her companion a blow, of the consequence of which the poor creature died in her arms. As soon as she saw her blood, she repented, she wept, she stopped the blood, and dressed the wound with herbs. Those who maintain that this relenting of humanity is only a branch of self-love, do that principle a great deal of honor. Let men call reason and conscience by what names they will, they exist, and are the foundation of the Law of Nature.

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<sup>1</sup> See the works of Louis Racine for details as to the wild girl.



# THE LAW OF NATURE.

A POEM IN FOUR PARTS.

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## EXORDIUM.

THOU whose exploits, and works,<sup>1</sup> and reign,  
Will be to sage and hero lesson plain—  
Who with unalter'd brow alike look'st down  
On life and death, the cottage and the crown;  
With force like thine my wavering soul inspire—  
Shed o'er me rays of that celestial fire  
Which owes to sacred reason all its light,  
Which prejudice, howe'er, may turn to night.  
On darkness, which o'erspreads the world below,  
Oh, be it ours some light, though faint, to throw.  
The first of studies in our early age,  
Were, I remember, Horace, Boileau's page.  
In them you sought, with philosophic mind,  
The true and beautiful at once to find;  
And with instructive and with moral lines,

---

<sup>1</sup> We know that this poem, regarded as one of our author's best works, was written about 1751, at the house of the Marchioness de Bareuth, sister of the King of Prussia. Some pedants had, afterwards the vile atrocity to condemn it.

These vile tyrants of mind had then too much credit, but have since been punished for all their insolence.

Brightly their finish'd composition shines ;  
But Pope, possess'd of genius more profound,  
What lightly they skimm'd over, knew to sound.  
Light into the abyss of being first he brought,  
And man by him to know himself was taught.  
A trivial now, and now a useful art,  
Verse is in Pope divine, it forms the heart.  
What need we know that Horace, hired to praise  
Octavius in vile and prostituted lays,  
When from the night's polluted joys he rose,  
Insulted Crispin in his measured prose ?  
That pension'd Boileau satire's venom shed  
On Quinault's lyre and Tasso's laurell'd head ;  
Could paint the hurry, bustle, and the throng  
Of Paris, where men scarce can pass along ;  
Or at a wretched feast what happ'd rehearse,  
In flowing numbers and harmonious verse ?  
A soul like thine to higher themes aspires,  
And nourishment for loftiest thought requires ;  
The spirit's essence thine it is to explore,  
Its end, beginning, but its duty more.  
See on this point what others wisely thought,  
What Error has to vulgar doctors taught !  
Let's scan and balance with those truths divine,  
Which Heaven suggests to such a soul as thine.  
God we should search for in ourselves alone ;  
If he exists, the human heart's his throne.  
Must we then seek in learning's winding maze  
The God who could us to existence raise ?  
Trust not to Origen or Scotus' page,  
Nature instructs us more than either sage ;  
Systems we'll drop, with follies of the wise,  
And, into self descending, learn to rise.



## PART I.

God has given men ideas of justice and conscience to warn them, just as he has given them every thing else necessary. This is that Law of Nature upon which religion is founded. This is the only principle herein discussed. The author speaks only of the Law of Nature, and not of religion and its awful mysteries.

WHETHER a self-existent<sup>1</sup> being laid  
 The world's foundations, out of nothing made;  
 If, forming matter, o'er it he presides,  
 And having shaped the mass, directs and guides;  
 Whether the soul, that bright, ethereal spark  
 Of heavenly fire, too oft obscure and dark,  
 Be of our senses one, or acts alone;  
 We all are subject to the Almighty's throne.  
 But at His throne, round which deep thunders roar,  
 What homage shall we pay, how God adore?  
 Can jealousy affect the eternal mind?  
 Will adulation there acceptance find?  
 Is it that warlike race, of haughty brow,  
 Who made Byzantium to their power bow,

---

<sup>1</sup> God being an infinite being, his nature must of consequence be unknown to all men. As this is a philosophical work, it was judged necessary to cite the opinion of philosophers. All the ancients, without exception, looked upon matter as eternal; this is almost the only point upon which they were agreed. Most of them maintained that God had set the world in order; none of them knew, that he had created it out of nothing. They asserted that the celestial intelligence was by his nature endued with a power of arranging matter, and that matter was by its nature self-existent.

According to almost all the philosophers and poets, the great gods dwelt at a distance from the earth. The soul of man was, in the opinion of many, a celestial fire; according to others, it was a harmony resulting from the organs; others represented it as a part of the divinity, *divinæ particulam auræ*; others a refined matter, or quintessence; the wisest considered it as an immaterial being: but whatever sect they embraced, they acknowledged that man is in every respect subject to the Deity.

The tranquil Chinese, and the Tartar rude,  
Whose arms so many regions have subdued,  
That rightly knows to praise the power divine,  
And offer grateful homage at his shrine?  
Various in language and religious lore,  
A different deity they all implore;  
Then all have err'd, let's therefore turn our eyes  
From vile impostors who delight in lies:<sup>1</sup>  
Nor let us vainly make attempt to sound  
Awful religion's mysteries profound;  
To reason let researches vain give place,  
Let's strive to know if God instructs our race.  
Nature to man has given with bounteous hand  
Whate'er his nature's cravings can demand;  
Sense's sure instinct, spirit's varied springs:  
To him each element its tribute brings.  
In the brain's foldings memory is placed,  
And on it nature's lively image traced.  
Ready at every motion of his will,  
His call external objects answer still;  
Sound to his ear is wafted by the air,  
The light he sees without or pains or care.  
As to his God, the end of human kind,  
Is man to ceaseless errors then confined?  
Is nature then display'd to mortals' eyes,  
While nature's God obscure and hidden lies?  
Is succor in my greatest need denied?  
Must my chief craving rest unsatisfied?  
No; God in vain has not his creatures made,  
The hand divine on every brow's display'd.  
My Master's will can never be conceal'd;

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<sup>1</sup> Confucius should not be confounded with these; he confined himself to natural religion, and discovered every thing that could be discovered without the light of revelation.

When he gave being he his law reveal'd.  
Doubtless he spoke, but spoke to all mankind;  
To Egypt's deserts he was ne'er confined.  
In Delphi, Delos, or the Sibyl's cave,  
No oracle the godhead ever gave.

Morality, unvaried and the same,  
Announces to each age God's holy name.  
'Tis Trajan's law, 'tis Socrates', 'tis yours :  
By nature preach'd, like nature it endures ;  
Reason receives it, and the keen remorse  
Of conscience strengthens it, and gives it force ;

For conscience makes the obstinate repent,  
And hardest bosoms at her voice relent.

Think you, young Ammon, mad ambition's slave,  
Not like you moderate, although as brave,  
In a friend's blood, when he his hands imbrued,  
By augurs to soft pity was subdued ?  
Religious rites for gold they had profaned,  
And wash'd the monarch's hands, by murder stain'd ;  
But nature's instinct could not be suppress'd,  
And pleaded strongly in the monarch's breast :

He could not his impetuous rage forgive,  
But thought himself a wretch unfit to live.  
This law, which bears in China sovereign sway,  
To which fierce Japanese due reverence pay,  
Fired Zoroaster's genius unconfined,  
And shed its sacred light on Solon's mind.  
It cries from Indus to cold Zembla's shore :

"Be just, thy country love, and God adore."

The Laplander, amid eternal snows,  
His God adores, and, what is justice, knows ;  
And sold to distant coasts, the negro race  
With joy, in others, negro features trace.  
No slanderer finds, no murderer ever knows,

The mind's calm sunshine, and the soul's repose ;  
 Nor ever thus his secret thoughts express'd :  
 " He who destroys the innocent is bless'd ;  
 Bless'd he, by whom his mother's blood is spilt—  
 Great the attractions and the charms of guilt."  
 Believe me, mortals, man with dauntless brow  
 Would openly such sentiments avow,  
 If there was not a universal law  
 Crimes to repress, and keep the world in awe.  
 Did men create the sense of guilt or shame ?  
 Their soul and faculties did mortals frame ?  
 Whether in Peru or in China flame  
 The golden heaps, their nature is the same ;  
 From the artist's hands new forms the ingots take,  
 But he who shapes, unable is to make :  
 Thus God, to whom each man his being owes,  
 In every heart the seeds of virtue sows.  
 True virtue by the Almighty first was made,  
 By man its counterfeit and empty shade ;  
 He may disguise the truth with errors vain,  
 His feelings an attempt to change restrain.

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## PART II.

Containing answers to the objections against Universal Morality, with a demonstration of that truth.

CARDAN and famed Spinosa both reply :  
 " This check of conscience, nature's boasted cry,  
 From mutual wants and habit takes its rise ;  
 'Tis these cement our friendships and our ties."

Foe to thyself, O sophist, weak and blind,  
 Whence springs this want? why did the Sovereign Mind  
 Make in the bosom of all mortals dwell  
 Instincts which to society impel?  
 The laws which man enacts soon pass away,  
 In all lands different, made but for a day.  
 Jacob two Hebrew sisters took to wife;  
 David, not shocking decency of life,  
 Gather'd a hundred beauties round his throne;  
 But Latran's ruler cannot have e'en one.  
 Here choice of heirs is wholly left to sires,  
 While birthright there the whole estate acquires:  
 A whisker'd Polander need but command,  
 And all the wheels of State come to a stand.  
 Electors must the emperor sustain,  
 The pope has dignity, the English, gain.  
 Worship, law, interests, variations know;  
 Virtue's alone unchangeable below.<sup>1</sup>  
 But while this moral beauty we admire,  
 See, on a scaffold, Britain's king expire.  
 Borgia the blade against his brother aims,  
 Nor heeds the sister, who his mercy claims.  
 There the Dutch rabble, roused to frantic rage,  
 Two brothers tear, the worthies of their age.  
 In France, Brinvilliers, constant still at prayers,  
 Poisons her sire, and to the priest repairs;  
 The just is by the wicked's force subdued;  
 Hence, do you virtue but a name conclude?  
 When with the baleful south wind's tainted breath,  
 All nature sickens, and each gale is death,

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<sup>1</sup> It is evident that variations are here ascribed only to institutions, such as civil laws and discipline, which are altered every day, as occasion requires.

Will you maintain, that since the world began,  
Health never yet was known to dwell with man ?  
The various pests that poison human life,  
The sad results of elemental strife,  
Oft mar the bliss of mortals here below ;  
But all is transient here, e'en guilt and woe.  
Soon as our passions fierce subside and cool,  
Our hearts assent to every moral rule.  
The source is pure ; the furious winds in vain  
Disturb its waves, or rushing torrents stain ;  
The mud that on its surface flows, refines,  
And by degrees the watery mirror shines ;  
The worst man there, fierce as the storm before,  
His image sees when once its rage is o'er.  
The light of reason Heaven gave not in vain  
To man, but added conscience to restrain.  
The springs of sense are moved by her command ;  
Who hears her voice is sure to understand :  
To minds by passion sway'd, though free before,  
She still an equilibrium can restore ;  
She kindles in each breast a generous flame,  
And makes self-love and social love the same.  
This spirit 'twas who Socrates did guide,  
And over all his actions did preside,  
Whose presence simply could his fears control,  
And give him strength to drink the poison'd bowl.  
And was such influence to the sage confined ?  
No ; God provides for all a Mentor kind :  
And thus, five years was Nero's fury quell'd,  
Five years the voice of flattery he repell'd.  
So good Aurelius, with strength supplied,  
Like a philosopher both lived and died.  
Julian, bewilder'd in religion's ways,  
To faith a rebel, reason sole obeys.



The Church's scandal, but of kings the pride,  
Ne'er from the Law of Nature turn'd aside.  
But cavillers who plain truth will never own,  
Still cry : To infants reason is unknown ;  
The power of education forms the mind,  
Man still to copy others, is inclined ;  
Nothing peculiar actuates his heart,  
Others he apes, and acts a borrow'd part ;  
Sounds high the name of justice, duty too ;  
Acts as a mere machine ; and taking nurse's view,  
He's Turk or Jew, Pagan or Child of Grace,  
Coated or fezzed, according to his race.  
I know example influence acquires  
O'er man ; that habit sentiment inspires.  
Speech, fashions, and the mind's unbounded range  
Of mad opinions, subject still to change,  
Are feeble traces by our sires impress'd,  
With mortal signet on each human breast.  
But the first springs are made by God's own hand ;  
Of source divine, they shall forever stand.  
To practise them the child a man must grow ;  
Their force he cannot in the cradle know.  
Do sparrows, when they first behold the light,  
Indulge in every amorous delight ?  
Do new-born foxes instant seek a prey ?  
Do changing insects spin their silken way,  
Or do the humming swarms, whose artful skill  
Can wax compose, and honey's sweets distil,  
Soon as they see the day, their work produce ?  
Time ripens, and brings all things into use.  
All beings have their object, and they tend  
At a fix'd period to their destined end.  
Passion, 'tis true, may hurry us along,  
Sometimes the just may deviate into wrong.

Oft man from good to hated evil flies,  
None in all moments, virtuous are, or wise.  
We're told, that man's a mystery o'er and o'er;  
All nature as mysterious is, or more.  
Philosophers, sagacious and profound,  
The beasts' sure instinct could you ever sound?  
The nature of the grass can you explain,  
That dies, then, rising, spreads a verdant plain?  
This world a veil o'erspreads of darkest night,  
If through the deep obscure, the glimmering light  
Of reason serves to guide us on our way,  
Should we extinguish it, and go astray?  
When God first fill'd the vast expanse of sky,  
Bid oceans flow and kindled suns on high,  
He said: Be in your limits fix'd contain'd,  
And in their bounds the rising worlds remain'd;  
On Venus and on Saturn laws he laid,  
So all the orbs of which our system's made.  
On jarring elements that still contend,  
On rolling thunders that the ether rend,  
On man created to adore his power,  
And on the worm that shall man's flesh devour,  
Shall man, audaciously, with effort vain,  
His own laws<sup>1</sup> add to those the heavens ordain?  
Should we, the phantoms of a day, at most,  
Who scarcely can a real existence boast,  
Place ourselves on the throne, at God's right hand,  
And strive to share with him supreme command?

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<sup>1</sup> By the word laws in this place, are meant only the transient opinions of men, who would make their peculiar sentiments pass for general laws.

## PART III.

Shows, that as men have for the most part disfigured, by the various opinions which they have adopted, the principle of natural religion which unites them, they should mutually bear with each other.

THE universe is God's eternal shrine,  
 Men<sup>1</sup> various ways adore the power divine.  
 All, of their faith, their saints, their martyr'd host,  
 And oracle's unerring voice, can boast.  
 On numerous ablutions one relies—  
 He thinks Heaven sees them with propitious eyes;  
 And that all those who are not circumcised,  
 Are by his God rejected and despised.  
 Another thinks he Brahma's favor gains,  
 While he from eating rabbit's flesh abstains;  
 Among the bless'd above he hopes a seat,  
 The just reward of merit so complete.  
 Against their neighbors all alike declaim,  
 And brand them with the unbeliever's name.  
 The jars amid contending Christians bred,  
 More desolation through the world have spread,  
 Pour'd forth more blood, oped more ensanguined graves  
 In His dread name, whose mercy all men saves,  
 Than the vain pretext of well-balanced powers,  
 E'er brought on Herman's land or France's flowers.  
 See an inquisitor, with air benign,  
 His neighbor's body to the flames consign;  
 Much sorrow at the tragic scene he shows,  
 But takes the money to assuage his woes;

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<sup>1</sup> *Men* in this place means individuals who have set themselves up as legislators; and the passage relates only to foreign forms of worship, as has been declared in the beginning of the first part.

While, touch'd with zeal, religious crowds advance,  
And, praising God, around the victim dance.  
Blind zeal could oft good Catholics excite,  
At leaving mass, to hurry to the fight,  
And, threatening each his neighbor, loudly cry  
"Wretch, think like me, or in an instant die."  
From Paris, Calvin and his sect withdrew,  
And at their effigies the hangman flew.  
Servetus, born in torments to expire,  
By Calvin's self was sentenced to the fire.  
But had Servetus been of power possess'd,  
The Trinitarians would have been the oppress'd;  
Quickly had ended all the warm dispute,  
For halters can the obstinate confute.  
Thus sectaries, who 'gainst Arminius rose,  
Bent all his tenets warmly to oppose,  
In Flanders gain'd the martyr's glorious name,  
In Holland executioners became.  
Why, for so many years, with pious rage,  
Religious wars did our forefathers wage?  
From nature's laws allegiance they withdrew,  
Or added others dangerous as new;  
And man, to his own sense an abject slave,  
To God his weakness and his passions gave,  
To Him ascribed the faults of human kind,  
And made Him fickle, false, to rage inclined;  
But Reason, thanks to heaven, in these our days,  
O'er half the globe diffuses kindly rays;  
Man, at her voice persuasive, grows humane;  
No piles are lighted, blood no altar stains.  
Should bigotry, howe'er, once more have rein,  
With equal rage those fires would burn again.  
We make, 'tis true, our generous efforts tend,  
Less often brethren to the stake to send.

Less horrid deeds fanatic thoughts inspire<sup>1</sup>—  
 At Lisbon, fewer Jews in flames expire.  
 Less oft is heard the Mufti's dreadful strain,  
 "Slave, follow Mahomet, from wine refrain!"  
 But dog<sup>2</sup> for us is still the Mufti's term,  
 That hell's our portion he will still affirm.  
 We pay them back: and in a trice we damn  
 The Turk, who bears from many a king the palm,  
 London, Berlin, Geneva, each and all,  
 Nor from God's curse, e'en you, O king, recall.  
 In vain, your goodness is, each day, display'd,  
 In vain, all human kind you shield and aid.  
 You people and improve the barren plain,  
 Arts cultivate, asylums build in vain:  
 For confidently many doctors say,<sup>3</sup>  
 That you from Beelzebub derive your sway.

The pagan virtues were but crimes at best.  
 Oh, maxim which all generous souls detest!  
 Base journalist, who, with malignant mind,  
 Think'st thyself authorized to damn mankind;  
 Thou seest with joy God human beings frame,

---

<sup>1</sup> When this poem was written, the author could not foresee that flames were to destroy a great part of that unhappy city in which fagots were too often kindled.

<sup>2</sup> It is common with the Turks to give the appellation of dog and infidel to the Christians.

<sup>3</sup> We respect the maxim, *Extra ecclesiam nulla est salus*, There is no salvation out of the Church; yet all men of sense look upon it as both ridiculous and abominable for private individuals to thunder such an anathema against men their superiors and masters in every respect: this is not like the procedure of reasonable men. Archbishop Tillotson would never have written in these terms to the Archbishop of Cambray, *Sir, you are damned*. A king of Portugal would not have written in this manner to a king of Engiand, who should send him aid, *Brother, you will certainly go to hell*. The menace of eternal damnation to those who do not think like us, is like a weapon deposited in an arsenal by the Church, and no individual is allowed to make use of it.

Satan to glut, and burn with endless flame !  
 Is't not enough, thou shouldst at once consign  
 Montaigne and Montesquieu to wrath divine ?  
 Shall Aristides, Socrates the sage,  
 Solon, the guide and model of his age,  
 Aurelius, Trajan, Titus dear to fame,  
 Against whom thou dost bitterly declaim,  
 Be cast into the depths of burning hell,  
 By the just Being, whom they served so well ?  
 And wilt thou be in heaven with glory crown'd,  
 While crowds of cherubims thy throne surround,  
 Because for years a wallet thou didst bear,  
 In ignorance slept, and sackcloth foul didst wear ?  
 Be blest above, with souls no war I wage ;  
 But why should Newton, wonder of this age,  
 Leibnitz profound, and Addison, whose mind  
 With learning fraught, and by true taste refined—  
 Locke,<sup>1</sup> first our mind's conception to explain,

<sup>1</sup> It is well known that the wise and modest Locke discovered the whole progress of the human understanding, and pointed out the limits of its power. Fully convinced of human weakness, and sensible of the infinite power of the Creator, he says that we have no knowledge of the nature of our souls but from faith : he says that man is not sufficiently enlightened to assert that God could not communicate thought to any being whatever, and even to matter itself.

Those who were still immersed in ignorance rose up in arms against him. Infatuated with a Cartesianism as false in every respect as Peripateticism itself, they were of opinion that matter is nothing else but extent in length, breadth, and depth ; they did not know that it is endued with the property of gravitating towards a centre, the *vis inertiae*, and many more ; that its elements are indivisible, though its component parts may be divided *ad infinitum*. They limited the power of the Supreme Being ; they did not reflect that, notwithstanding all the discoveries that have been made concerning the nature of matter, we are still in the dark as to its essence. They should have taken it into consideration, that it has been long debated whether the human understanding be a faculty or substance. They should have examined themselves, and they would have been sensible that our understandings are too limited to sound this abyss.

The faculty of moving, which beasts have, is not a substance, a being



And understanding's limits ascertain—  
 Men whom the God supreme deign'd to inspire,  
 Wherefore should these be doom'd to penal fire?  
 In judging, be more temperate and cool,

in itself; it appears to be a gift of the Creator. Locke has advanced that the same Creator may confer the gift of thinking upon whatever being he thinks proper. According to this hypothesis, which subjects us more than any other to the Supreme Being, thought added to any element of matter is not less pure or less immortal than it is supposed to be in any other system. That indivisible element is imperishable; thought may, doubtless, exist with it to all eternity, after the body is dissolved. This is what Locke offers to our consideration, without affirming any thing. He speaks of what God might have done, and not of what he has done. He does not pretend to know what matter is: he acknowledges that, between it and God, there may be an infinity of created substances totally different from each other; in fact, light, elementary fire, as Sir Isaac Newton has observed in his *Principia*, seems to hold the middle place between the unknown being called *matter*, and other beings still more unknown. Light does not tend to a centre like matter; it does not seem to be impenetrable; accordingly, Newton often repeats, in his *Optics*, "I do not enter into the question, whether the rays of light are bodies or not."

Locke has advanced that there may be an infinite number of substances, and that God may communicate ideas to these substances. We cannot conjecture by what art divine any being can form ideas; we are very far from such a degree of penetration; we shall never know how an earthworm can be capable of motion. In all these researches, we should look up to God, and acknowledge our weakness. Such is Mr. Locke's philosophy, as grand as it is simple; and this submission to God men have presumed to treat as impiety; his followers, convinced of the immortality of the soul, have been called Materialists; and such a man as Locke has been censured as tedious, by the compiler of a treatise upon Physics.<sup>1</sup>

Granting even that Locke was mistaken in this point (if he can be mistaken who affirms nothing), he is not the less deserving of the praise bestowed on him here; he is, in my opinion, the first who has made it appear that we are not acquainted with any axiom, till we know the particular truths that enter into it; he is the first who has shown in what entity consists; what it is to be the same person, the same self; he is the first who has proved the system of innate ideas to be false. Upon this occasion, I cannot help observing, that certain schools pronounced anathemas against innate ideas, when they were established by Descartes, and afterwards pronounced other anathemas against the adversaries of innate ideas, when Locke had shown them to be absurd. Thus do men judge when they are not philosophers.

<sup>1</sup> Pluche, author of *Spectacle de la Nature*.

Teach not Eternal Wisdom how to rule ;  
To judge severely such great men, beware,  
And those who ne'er condemn'd thee, learn to spare.  
Religion, well observed, will quell thy rage,  
And make thee mild, compassionate, and sage ;  
Drown others not, but try the port to find,  
He's right who pardons, but the angry blind.  
Sons of one God, in these our days of woe,  
Let's live like brothers while we dwell below.  
Let's strive to lend each other kind relief,  
We groan beneath a load of woes and grief:  
Against our lives a thousand foes lay wait,  
Our lives, which we at once both love and hate :  
Some guide, some prop, our wavering hearts require,  
With languor chill'd, or burn'd with strong desire.  
Tears by the happiest mortals have been shed,  
All have their share of anxious care and dread.  
If kind society her succors lend,  
Her joys awhile our griefs and cares suspend,  
Yet even here a weak resource we find,  
'Gainst grief, that ever rankles in the mind.  
Dash not the cup in which our comforts flow,  
Do not corrupt the balm of human woe.  
Felons, methinks, I in a dungeon spy,  
Who at their fellow's throats with fury fly ;  
And though they could relieve each other's pains,  
Forever jar and combat with their chains.

*Continued  
Speeches  
Chap.*

## PART IV.

Proves that it is the business of the government to put an end to the unhappy disputes of the schools, by which the peace of society is disturbed.

I OFT have heard it from your lips august :  
 'Tis the grand duty, doubtless, to be just ;  
 And the first blessing is the heart's repose.  
 How could you, where so many sects oppose,  
 Amid incessant wrangling and debate,  
 Preserve a peace so lasting in the State ?  
 Whence is it Calvin's sons and Luther's, tell,  
 Deem'd o'er the Alps the devil's offspring fell ;  
 Roman and Greek, and those who quiet seek,  
 The broad-brimmed Quaker, Anabaptist meek,  
 Who in their law could never yet agree,  
 Are all united in the praise of thee ?  
 'Tis because nature form'd thee for the throne ;  
 Like thee to rule had the last Valois known,  
 No prior-directed monk, with fury fired,  
 To rival Judith and Aod aspired ;  
 Ne'er on the king his hands profane had laid ;  
 But Valois edged the church's<sup>1</sup> murderous blade,  
 That blade by which, though subject crowds stood round,  
 Great Henry after fell, for worth renown'd.  
 Such cursed effects from pious quarrels flow,  
 Or soon or late all factions bloody grow ;

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<sup>1</sup> We are not by the word church, in this place, to understand the Catholic Church ; nothing is here alluded to but the abominable fanaticism of some ecclesiastics, detested by the Church in all ages.

Quickly they spread, and strength acquire, if prized,  
But quickly sink to nothing if despised.  
He who can armies lead against the foe,  
To govern perverse priests should fully know.  
The king, whose arms left heroes in the shade,  
A sly confessor did indeed persuade  
That Quesnel or that Jansen threatens the State,  
And 'gainst them rouse the monarch's direful hate.  
See thence arise great factions fill'd with ire,  
Judges stone blind become, lawyers conspire ;  
Then Jesuits, capuchins, and cordeliers,  
Fill the whole realm with scruples and with fears ;  
But by the regent laughing-stocks once made,<sup>1</sup>  
They'd quickly sink into oblivion's shade.

The Master's eye, with his unwearied hand,  
Can every thing desirable command.  
Who cultivates, within the well-fenced field,  
The treasures which the spring and autumn yield,  
Can water, earth, sun's various gifts bestow,  
Upon the trees that in his gardens grow ;  
On slender props the feeble branch he rears,  
And from the ground the useless plants up-tears ;  
Or prunes them when they too luxuriant shoot,  
And drain of needful sap the trunk and root.  
His lands afford him all he can desire,  
The laws of nature with his toil conspire ;  
A tree which he has planted with his hand,  
Is sure, with others, to enrich the land ;  
And all the planter's cares are well repaid

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<sup>1</sup> This ridicule, the sense of which is universal among all nations, falls upon great intrigues occasioned by trifles, upon the inveterate animosity of two parties, which could never agree with regard to the sense of four thousand printed volumes.

With luscious fruits and with a grateful shade.  
A neighboring gard'ner, by mean vengeance driven,  
Can ne'er upon him bring the ire of heaven,  
Can ne'er, by curses, make his fruits decay,  
Or vines and fig-trees wither all away.

(Wretched those nations where laws still contend!

Their jarring factions never can have end :

The Roman Senate, watchful o'er the State,

Morals and rites intent to regulate,

Set to the vestals' number its due bound,

Nor suffer'd bacchanals to range around.

Aurelius, Trajan, princes of renown,

The pontiff's bonnet wore, and emperor's crown.

The world depended on their care alone,

And the schools' vain disputes were then unknown :

Those legislators, with sage maxims fraught,

Ne'er for their sacred hens with fury fought.

(See Rome e'en now by maxims such command,

And throne with altar, wisely join'd, command ;

Her citizens enjoy serene repose,

More bless'd than when they crush'd a thousand foes.

Not that I think kings should the mitre wear,

And the cross jointly with the sceptre bear ;

Or when they come from council should, aloud,

Utter their benediction to the crowd ;

But I assert that kings, when they are crown'd,

To maintain order are by duty bound,

That their authority's o'er all the same,<sup>1</sup>

That all their fatherly protection claim.

The trader, workman, soldier, priest sedate,

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<sup>1</sup> It should not be inferred from hence, that every order in the State has not its peculiar distinctions, its privileges inseparably annexed to its particular functions. In all countries the various orders of a State enjoy their several privileges: but they are all equally bound by the general law.

Are all alike true members of the State.  
 Religious ordinances level all,  
 The rich and poor, the great as well as small;  
 Equal authority has civil law,  
 This keeps both citizens and priests in awe.  
 In every State the law should sovereign stand,  
 Extend o'er all the same impartial hand.  
 Farther to treat of such points I decline,  
 Ne'er for the crown design'd this soul of mine;  
 But from the port, where now my life I close,  
 In tranquil happiness and calm repose,  
 Seeing the storms that all around me rage,  
 I with your lessons moralize my page.  
 From this discourse what inference shall we draw?  
 That prejudice to fools alone gives law;  
 We should not for it with fierce rage contend,  
 Earth teems with error, truths from heaven descend;  
 And amid thistles which obstruct the way,  
 The sage finds paths that cannot lead astray.  
 Peace, which man wishes, while he from it flies,  
 As much as sacred truth, should mortals prize.

#### PRAYER.

O God, misunderstood, whom all proclaims,  
 Hear the last words my humble mouth now frames:  
 If I mistook, 'twas while thy law I sought—  
 I may have err'd, but thou wast in each thought;  
 Fearless I look beyond the opening grave,  
 And cannot think the God, who being gave,  
 The God, whose favors made my bliss o'erflow,  
 Has doom'd me, after death, to endless woe.



A P O E M

UPON THE

DESTRUCTION OF LISBON.



## THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

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IF the question concerning physical evil ever deserves the attention of men, it is in those melancholy events which put us in mind of the weakness of our nature: such as plagues, which carry off a quarter of the inhabitants of the known world; the earthquake which swallowed up four hundred thousand of the Chinese in 1699, that of Lima and Callao, and, in the last place, that of Portugal, and the kingdom of Fez. The maxim, *Whatever is, is right*, appears somewhat extraordinary to those who have been eye-witnesses of such calamities. All things are doubtless arranged and set in order by Providence; but it has long been too evident that its superintending power has not disposed them in such a manner as to promote our temporal happiness.

When the celebrated Pope published his *Essay on Man*, and expounded in immortal verse the systems of Leibnitz, Lord Shaftesbury, and Lord Bolingbroke, his system was attacked by a multitude of divines of a variety of communions; they were shocked at the novelty of the propositions, *Whatever is, is right*, and that *Man always enjoys that measure of happiness which is suited to his being*. There are few writings that may not be condemned, if considered in one light, or approved of, if considered in another. It would be much more reasonable to attend only to the beauties and improving parts of a work, than to endeavor to put an odious construction upon it; but it is one of the imperfections of our nature to put a bad interpretation upon whatever has a dubious sense, and to run down whatever has been successful.

In a word, it was the opinion of many, that the axiom, *Whatever is, is right*, was subversive of all our received ideas. If it be true, said they, that *whatever is, is right*, it follows, that human nature did not fall. If the general order requires that every thing should be as it is, human nature has not been corrupted, and consequently could have had no occasion for a Redeemer. If this world, such as it is, be the best of systems possible, we have no room to hope for a happy future state. If the various evils, by which man is overwhelmed, end in general good, all civilized nations have been wrong in endeavoring to trace out the origin of moral and physical evil. If a man devoured by wild beasts, causes the well-being of those beasts, and contributes to promote the order of the universe; if the misfortunes of individuals are only the consequence of this general and necessary order, we are nothing more than wheels which serve to keep the great machine in motion; we are not more precious in the eyes of God, than the animals by whom we are devoured.

These are the inferences which were drawn from Mr. Pope's poem; and these very conclusions increased the sale and success of the work. But it should have been seen in another point of view. Readers should have considered the reverence for the Deity, the resignation to his supreme will, the useful morality, and the spirit of toleration, which breathe through this excellent poem. This the public has done; and the work being translated by men equal to the task, has completely triumphed over critics, though it turned upon matters of so delicate a nature.

It is the nature of over-violent censurers to give importance to the opinions which they attack. A book is railed at on account of its success, and a thousand errors are imputed to it. What is the consequence of this? Men, disgusted with these invectives, take for truths the very errors which these critics think they have discovered. Cavillers raise the phantoms on purpose to combat them, and indignant readers embrace these very phantoms.

Critics have declared, that Pope and Leibnitz maintain the

doctrine of fatality; the partisans of Leibnitz and Pope have said, on the other hand, if Leibnitz and Pope have taught the doctrine of fatality, they were in the right, and all this invincible fatality we should believe.

Pope had advanced, that *whatever is, is right*, in a sense that might very well be admitted, and his followers maintain the same proposition in a sense that may very well be contested.

The author of the poem upon the destruction of Lisbon, does not write against the illustrious Pope, whom he always loved and admired; he agrees with him in almost every particular, but compassionating the misery of man, he declares against the abuse of the new maxim, *Whatever is, is right*. He maintains that ancient and sad truth acknowledged by all men, that *there is evil upon earth*; he acknowledges, that the words *whatever is, is right*, if understood in a positive sense, and without any hopes of a happy future state, only insult us in our present misery.

If, when Lisbon, Mequinez, Tetuan, and other cities were swallowed up, with a great number of their inhabitants, in the month of November, 1759, philosophers had cried out to the wretches, who with difficulty escaped from the ruins: "All this is productive of general good; the heirs of those who have perished will increase their fortune; masons will earn money by rebuilding the houses; beasts will feed upon the carcasses buried under the ruins; it is the necessary effect of necessary causes; your particular misfortune is nothing, it contributes to universal good;" such a harangue would doubtless have been as cruel as the earthquake was fatal, and all that the author of the *Poem on the Destruction of Lisbon* has said, amounts only to this.

He acknowledges, with all mankind, that there is evil as well as good upon the earth; he owns, that no philosopher has ever been able to explain the nature of moral and physical evil. He asserts that Bayle, the greatest master of the art of reasoning that ever wrote, has only taught to doubt, and that he combats himself; he owns that man's understanding is as weak as his life is miserable. He lays a concise abstract of the

several different systems before his readers. He says, that Revelation alone can untie the great knot which philosophers have only rendered more puzzling; and that nothing but the hope of our existence being continued in a future state, can console us under our present misfortunes; that the goodness of Providence is the only asylum in which man can take refuge in the darkness of reason, and in the calamities to which his weak and frail nature is exposed.

P. S. Readers should always distinguish between the objections which an author proposes to himself, and his answers to those objections, and should not mistake what he refutes for what he adopts.

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#### NOTE.

PERHAPS Mr. Pope's system was never before looked upon as the same with Lord Shaftesbury's; it is, however, an incontestable truth that it is so: the whole physical part of it is to be met with, word for word, in the first part of the chapter, entitled, *The Moralists*, section the first, beginning with: "Much is alleged in answer to show," etc. Many answers have been made to these complaints of the defects of nature. How can she have come so faulty and impotent out of the hands of a perfect being? But I deny that she is faulty,—her beauty is the result of contrarieties, and universal harmony springs from a perpetual combat. . . . Every thing that exists must be sacrificed to something else; vegetables to animals, animals to the earth . . . and the laws of central power and vegetation which give the celestial bodies their weight and motion, will not be put in confusion for the sake of a wretched and weak animal, who, though protected by those laws, will soon be reduced to dust by them." This is admirable; yet notwithstanding this, Mr. Clarke, in his treatise upon the existence of God, has declared: "That in the rank which the human species is placed in this present state, the order of things is inverted," vol. ii.



p. 20, second edition, translated by Mr. Ricotier. Man may, notwithstanding, say : I should be as dear to my master, I that am a sensible and thinking being, as the planets which are probably without sensation ; the affairs of this world might be otherwise notwithstanding this, since we are told, that order has been perverted, and will be re-established : notwithstanding this, moral and physical evil may be things incomprehensible to the human mind : notwithstanding this, Pope and Shaftesbury's maxim, *Whatever is, is right*, one banned as atheistic, but now canonized, may be justly called in question. The moral part of Pope's *Essay on Man* is likewise to be found entire in Shaftesbury, in the inquiry into the nature of moral virtue, at the beginning of the second volume of the *Characteristics*. Therein the author lays it down as a maxim, that particular interest well understood, constitutes the general interest.

It is not only possible to love the public good as well as our own, but the latter sort of love is inseparably connected with the former. The words of Lord Shaftesbury are : "To be well affected towards the public interest and one's own, is not only consistent, but inseparable." This he makes it his business to prove through the whole book ; and this is the basis of the moral part of Pope's *Essay on Man*. He concludes it by asserting,

"That reason, passion, answer one great aim,  
That true self-love and social be the same."

Reason and passion conspire to produce the great end which the Deity has in view. True self-love and social love are, in fact, the same.

Such excellent morality much more forcibly inculcated in Pope than Shaftesbury, always gave high satisfaction to the author of the *Poems on the Destruction of Lisbon*, and the *Law of Nature* : for this reason he speaks of the former in these terms,

"Mais Pope approfondit se qu'ils ont effleuré,  
Et l'homme avec lui apprend à se connaître."

Lord Shaftesbury further proves, that the perfection of virtue must spring from the belief of a God. His words are : " And thus perfection of virtue must be owing to the belief of a God."

It is most probable that these are the words which have induced some persons to look upon Shaftesbury as an atheist. If they had read his work with care, they would not have cast such an aspersion upon a peer of England, and a philosopher educated by the sagacious Locke.

It was in the same way that Father Hardouin treated Pascal, Malebranche, and Arnauld as atheists. Thus did Dr. Lange represent the respectable Wolfius as an atheist, for having spoken well of the morality of the Chinese ; and Wolfius having alleged, in his vindication, the testimony of the Jesuit missionaries to China, the answer made by the doctor was : " Does not everybody know that the Jesuits are atheists ?" Those who deplored the affair of the devils of Loudun, which was such a disgrace to human reason ; those who were scandalized that a friar conducting Urban Grandier to execution should strike him with an iron crucifix, were called atheists by the whole order. Those of the sect of Convulsionaries declared, in printed books, that all who made a jest of their convulsions were no better than atheists ; and the Molinists have a hundred times given the same appellation to the Jansenists. About twenty years ago, when a writer of reputation wrote upon inoculating for the small-pox, an author never before heard of expressed himself in the following terms : " No one but an atheist, infected by the follies of the English, could be so mad as to advise his countrymen to incur certain evil for an uncertain good."

The author of the *Ecclesiastical Journal*, who has so long tranquilly written against government, law, and reason, has, in one whole sheet, exerted himself to the utmost to prove that Mons. de Montesquieu was an atheist ; and in another that he was a deist.

St. Sorlin des Maretz, known to the world by the poem of Clovis, and by his fanaticism, one day seeing La Mothe le Vayer, privy counsellor and preceptor to the king's brother,

pass through the gallery of the Louvre, cried out : " There goes a man who has no sense of religion ;" La Mothe turned about, and made him this answer : " Friend, I have too much religion to be of yours." To conclude, the odious and ridiculous practice of accusing all who are not exactly of the same sentiments with us of atheism, has contributed, more than any other cause whatever, to render controversy contemptible to all Europe.



# P O E M

UPON

## THE DESTRUCTION OF LISBON;

OR,

AN INQUIRY INTO THE MAXIM, "WHATEVER IS,  
IS RIGHT."

---

O WRETCHED man! earth, fated to be cursed!  
Abyss of plagues, and miseries the worst!  
Horrors on horrors, grief on griefs must show,  
That man's the victim of unceasing woe,  
And lamentations, which inspire my strain,  
Prove that philosophy is false and vain.  
Approach in crowds, and meditate awhile  
Yon shatter'd walls, and view each ruin'd pile,  
Women and children heap'd up mountain high,  
Limbs crush'd, which under ponderous marble lie;  
Wretches unnumber'd in the pangs of death,  
Who, mangled, torn, and panting for their breath,  
Buried beneath their sinking roofs expire,  
Ending their wretched lives in torments dire.  
Say, when you hear their piteous, half-form'd cries,  
Or from their ashes see the smoke arise—  
Say, will you then eternal laws maintain,  
Which God to cruelties like these constrain?  
While you these facts, replete with horror, view,

Will you maintain, death to their crimes was due ?  
And can you, then, impute a sinful deed  
To babes who on their mothers' bosoms bleed ?  
Was then more vice in fallen Lisbon found,  
Than Paris, where voluptuous joys abound ?  
Was less debauchery to London known,  
Where opulence luxurious holds her throne ?  
Earth Lisbon swallows ; the light sons of France  
Protract the feast, or lead the sprightly dance.  
Spectators, who undaunted courage show,  
While you behold your dying brethren's woe ;  
With stoical tranquillity of mind  
You seek the causes of these ills to find :  
But when, like us, Fate's rigors you have felt,  
Become humane like us, you'll learn to melt.  
When the earth gapes my body to entomb,  
I justly may complain of such a doom.  
Hemm'd round on every side by cruel fate,  
The snares of death, the wicked's furious hate,  
Prey'd on by pain, and by corroding grief,  
Suffer me from complaint to find relief.  
'Tis pride, you cry, seditious pride, that still  
Asserts mankind should be exempt from ill.  
The awful truth on Tagus' banks explore ;  
Search through the ruins on that bloody shore ;  
Wretches interr'd alive in direful grave,  
Ask if pride cries, " Good Heaven, thy creatures save !"  
If 'tis presumption that makes mortals cry,  
" Heaven, on our sufferings cast a pitying eye !"  
All's right, you answer ; the Eternal Cause  
Rules not by partial, but by general laws.  
Say, what advantage can result to all,  
From wretched Lisbon's lamentable fall ?  
Are you then sure, the Power which could create



The universe, and fix the laws of fate,  
Could not have found for man a proper place,  
But earthquakes must destroy the human race?  
Will you thus limit the eternal mind?  
Should not our God to mercy be inclined?  
Cannot, then, God direct all nature's course?  
Can power almighty be without resource?  
Humbly the great Creator I entreat,  
This gulf, with sulphur and with fire replete,  
Might on the deserts spend its raging flame.  
God my respect, my love weak mortals claim;  
When man groans under such a load of woe,  
He is not proud, he only feels the blow;  
Would words like these to peace of mind restore  
The natives sad of that disastrous shore:  
"Grieve not that other's bliss may overflow,  
Your sumptuous palaces are laid thus low;  
Your burned towers shall other hands rebuild,  
With multitudes your walls one day be fill'd;  
Your ruin on the North shall wealth bestow,  
For general good from partial ills must flow;  
You seem as abject to the sovereign power  
As worms, which shall your carcasses devour."  
No comfort could such shocking words impart,  
They'd only wound the sad, afflicted heart.  
When I lament my present wretched state,  
Allege not the unchanging laws of fate;  
Urge not the links of the eternal chain;  
'Tis false philosophy, and wisdom vain.  
The God who holds the chain cannot be chain'd;<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The universal chain is not, as some have thought, a regular gradation which connects all beings. There is, in all probability, an immense distance between man and beast, as well as between man and substances of a superior nature; there is, likewise, an infinity between God and all created

By his bless'd will are all events ordain'd :  
 He's just, nor easily to wrath gives way—

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beings whatever. There are none of these insensible gradations in the globes which move round our sun in their several periods, whether we consider their mass, their distances, or their satellites.

If we may believe Pope, man is not capable of discovering the reason why the satellites of Jove are less than Jove himself; he is herein mistaken; such an error as this may well be overlooked in so fine a genius. Every smatterer in mathematics could have told Lord Bolingbroke and Mr. Pope that, if the satellites of Jove had equalled him in magnitude, they could not have moved round him; but no mathematician is able to discover a regular gradation in the bodies of the solar system.

It is not true, that the world could not subsist if a single atom was taken from it. This was justly observed by Mr. Crousaz, a learned geometrician, in a tract which he wrote against Pope. He seems to have been right in this point, though he was fully refuted by Mr. Warburton and Mr. Silhouette.

The concatenation of events was admitted and defended with the utmost ingenuity, by the celebrated philosopher Leibnitz; it is worth explaining. All bodies and all events depend upon other bodies and other events. That cannot be denied; but all bodies are not essential to the support of the universe, and the preservation of its order; neither are all events necessary in the general series of events. A drop of water, a grain of sand, more or less, can cause no revolution in the general system. Nature is not confined to any determinate quantity, or any determinate form. No planet moves in a curve completely regular; there is nothing in nature of a figure exactly mathematical; no fixed quantity is required for any operation; nature is never very strict or rigid in her method of proceeding. It is, therefore, absurd to advance, that the removal of an atom from the earth might be the cause of its destruction.

This holds, in like manner, with regard to events. The cause of every event is contained in some preceding event; this no philosopher has ever called in question. If Cæsar's mother had never gone through the Cæsar-ian operation, Cæsar had never subverted the commonwealth; he could never have adopted Octavius, and Octavius could never have chosen Tiberius for his successor in the empire. The marriage of Maximilian with the heiress of Burgundy and the Low Countries, gave rise to a war which lasted two hundred years. But Cæsar's spitting on the right or left side, or the Duchess of Burgundy's dressing her head in this manner or in that, could have altered nothing in the general plan of Providence.

It follows, therefore, that there are some events which have consequences, and others which have none. Their chain resembles a genealogical tree, some branches of which disappear at the first generation, while the race is continued by others. There are many events which pass away without ever generating others. Thus, in every machine there are some effects indispensably necessary towards producing motion, and others which are productive of nothing at all. The wheels of a coach make it go; but

Why suffer we beneath so mild a sway ?<sup>1</sup>  
 This is the fatal knot you should untie ;  
 Our evils do you cure, when you deny ?  
 Men never strove into the source to pry  
 Of evil, whose existence you deny.  
 If he whose hand the elements can wield,  
 To the wind's force makes rocky mountains yield,  
 If thunder lays oaks level with the plain,  
 From the bolts' strokes they never suffer pain.  
 But I can feel, my heart oppress'd demands  
 Aid of that God, who form'd me with his hands.  
 Sons of the God supreme, to suffer all  
 Fated alike ; we on our father call.  
 No vessel of the potter asks, we know,  
 Why it was made so brittle, vile, and low !  
 Vessels, of speech, as well as thought, are void ;  
 The urn this moment form'd, and that destroy'd,  
 The potter never could with sense inspire ;  
 Devoid of thought, it nothing can desire.  
 The moralist, still obstinate, replies,  
 " Others' enjoyments from your woes arise."

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whether they raise more or less dust, the journey is finished alike. Such is the general order of the world, that the links of the chain would not be in the least discomposed by a small increase or diminution of the quantity of matter, or by an inconsiderable deviation from regularity.

The chain is not in an absolute *plenum* ; it has been demonstrated that the celestial bodies perform their revolutions in an unresisting medium. Every space is not filled. It follows, then, that there is not a progression of bodies from an atom to the most remote fixed star. There may of consequence be immense intervals between beings endued with sensation, as well as between those that are not. We cannot, then, be certain that man must be placed in one of these links joined to another by an uninterrupted connection. All things are linked together, means only that all things are regularly disposed in their proper order. God is the cause and the regulator of that order. Homer's Jupiter was the slave of destiny ; but according to more rational philosophy, God is the master of destiny. See Clarke's *Treatise upon the Existence of God*.

<sup>1</sup> Sub Deo justo nemo miser, nisi mercatur.—*St. Augustine*.

To numerous insects shall my corpse give birth,  
When once it mixes with its mother earth.  
Small comfort 'tis, that when death's ruthless power  
Closes my life, worms shall my flesh devour.  
Remembrancers of misery, refrain  
From consolation; you increase my pain!  
Complaint, I see, you have with care repress'd,  
And proudly hid your sorrows in your breast.  
But a small part, I no importance claim  
In the vast universe, the general frame.  
All other beings in this world below,  
Condemn'd, like me, to lead a life of woe,  
Subject to laws as rigorous as I,  
Like me in anguish live, and like me die.  
The vulture, urged by an insatiate maw,  
Its trembling prey tears with relentless claw:  
This it finds right; endued with greater powers,  
The bird of Jove the vulture's self devours;  
Man lifts his gun, he aims the fatal ball,  
And makes to earth the towering eagle fall;  
Man in the field, with wounds all cover'd o'er,  
Midst heaps of dead lies weltering in his gore,  
While birds of prey the mangled limbs devour  
Of nature's lord, who boasts his mighty power.  
Thus the world's members equal ills sustain,  
And perish by each other, born to pain;  
Yet, in this direful chaos, you'd compose  
A general bliss from individual's woes?  
Oh, worthless bliss! in injured reason's spite,  
With faltering voice, you cry, "What is, is right."  
The universe confutes your boasting vain;  
Your heart retracts the error you maintain.  
Men, beasts, and elements know no repose  
From dire contention; earth's the seat of woes.

We strive in vain its secret source to find ;  
Is ill the gift of our Creator kind ?  
Do then fell Typhon's<sup>1</sup> cursed laws ordain  
Our ill, or Arimanius<sup>2</sup> doom to pain ?  
Shock'd at such dire chimeras, I reject  
Monsters, which fear could into gods erect.  
But how conceive a God, the source of love,  
Who man o'erwhelms with blessings from above,  
Then doth the race with various plagues confound ?  
Can mortals penetrate his views profound ?  
Ill could not from a perfect being spring,  
Nor from aught else,<sup>3</sup> since God's the sovereign king !  
And yet, sad truth ! in this our world 'tis found.  
What contradictions here my soul confound !  
A God once dwelt on earth among mankind,  
Yet vices still lay waste the human mind ;<sup>4</sup>  
He could not do it, this proud sophist cries ;  
He could, but he declined it, that replies ;  
He surely will, ere these disputes have end ;  
Lisbon's foundations hidden thunders rend,  
And thirty cities' shatter'd remnants fly,  
In hopeless ruin through the angry sky,  
From dismal Tagus's ensanguined shore,  
To where of Cadiz' sea the billows roar.  
Or man's a sinful creature from his birth,  
And God to woe condemns the sons of earth ;  
Or else the Governor of life and space,  
Untouch'd with pity for the human race,  
Indifferent, both from love and anger free,

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<sup>1</sup> The author of evil, according to the ancient Egyptians.

<sup>2</sup> The author of evil, according to the ancient Persians.

<sup>3</sup> From another principle.

<sup>4</sup> An English philosopher has maintained, that the physical world must have been new formed at the first coming of Christ, as well as the moral world.



Still acts consistent to his first decree ;  
Or matter has defects which still oppose  
God's will, and thence all human evil flows ;  
Or, yet, this transient world, by mortals trod,  
Is but a passage that conducts to God.<sup>1</sup>  
Our fleeting sorrows here shall soon be o'er,  
And death will land us on a happier shore.  
But, when we rise from this accurst abyss,  
Who by his merit can lay claim to bliss ?  
Dangers and difficulties man surround,  
Doubts and perplexities his mind confound.  
To nature we apply for truth, in vain ;  
God should his will to human kind explain ;  
He only can illumine the human soul,  
Instruct the wise man, and the weak console.  
Without him, man, of error still the sport,  
Thinks from each broken reed to find support.  
Leibnitz cannot explain the secret cause,  
Which, in a world ruled by the wisest laws,  
Lasting disorders, woes that never end,  
With our vain pleasures real sufferings blend.  
Why ill the virtuous with the vicious shares ?  
Why neither good nor bad, misfortune spares ?  
I can't conceive that *what is, ought to be* ;  
And find that I no more than doctors see.  
We're told by Plato, man, in times of yore,  
Wings gorgeous to his glorious body wore,  
That all attacks he could, unhurt, sustain,  
By death ne'er conquer'd, ne'er approach'd by pain.  
Alas ! how changed from such a brilliant state !

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<sup>1</sup> These and the foregoing lines contain, besides the hypothesis of two self-existent principles, one of good, and the other of evil, all the solutions that occur to the human mind upon this abstruse subject ; it is revelation alone that can enlighten the mind in matters above our comprehension.



He crawls 'twixt heaven and earth, then yields to Fate.  
 Look round this sublunary world, you'll find  
 That nature to destruction is consign'd.  
 Our system weak, which nerves and bone compose,  
 Cannot the shock of elements oppose ;  
 This mass of fluids mix'd with temper'd clay,  
 To dissolution quickly must give way.  
 Their keen sensations cannot long sustain  
 The attacks of sickness or of constant pain.  
 This is the nature of the human frame ;  
 Plato and Epicurus I disclaim.  
 Nature was more to Bayle than either known :  
 What do I learn from Bayle ?—to doubt alone.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> About a hundred observations scattered up and down in Bayle's Dictionary, have acquired him immortal reputation. He has left the controversy concerning the origin of evil undecided. He lays all manner of opinions before his readers ; all the arguments by which they are supported, and all the arguments by which they may be contested, are by him discussed ; he is, as it were, the recorder of philosophers, but he never gives his own opinion. He resembles Cicero, who often, in his philosophical works assumes the character of an academician who decides nothing ; this is the remark of the learned and judicious Abbé d'Olivet.

I think it my duty, in this place, to endeavor to soften those who have so long attacked Bayle with so much virulence, and to so little purpose : when I say to so little purpose, I do not say enough ; their invectives have only made people more desirous of reading his works ; they should endeavor to learn moderation, and the art of reasoning from him. The philosophical Bayle did not, however, deny Providence, or the immortality of the soul. The works of Cicero are translated, commented upon, and thought necessary in the education of princes ; yet what strange doctrine occurs in almost every page of Cicero, among passages worthy of the highest admiration ? He advances over and over, that if there is a Providence, it is to be blamed for giving man an intelligent soul, which it knew he would make an ill use of. *Sic vestra ista Providentia reprehenda est quæ rationem dedit eis quos scierit eâ perverse et improbe usuros.* (*Libro tertio de Naturâ Deorum*, Cap. xxxi.)

"No one ever looked upon virtue as a gift of the gods, and it certainly cannot be considered in that light." *Virtutem autem nemo unquam Deo retulit ; nimirum recte.* (*Ibid.*, Cap. xxxvi.) "If a criminal dies unpunished, you say the gods will afflict his posterity. Would a State bear with a legislator who should punish the grandchildren for the crimes of their grandfather ?" *Ferretne ulla civitas latorem istius modi legis ut condemna-*

Bayle, great and wise, all systems overthrows,  
 Then his own tenets labors to oppose.  
 Like Samson blind amid Philistia's bands,  
 Crush'd 'neath the pile demolish'd by his hands.  
 How vain man's efforts are to penetrate,  
 God's ways! To him is seal'd the book of fate.  
 Man his own nature never yet could sound,  
 Knows not what, whence he is, nor whither bound.<sup>1</sup>

*retur filius aut nepos, si pater aut avus deliquisset?* (*Ibid.*, Cap. xxxviii.) What is still more surprising, Cicero concludes his treatise upon the nature of the gods without refuting such assertions as these. In his *Tusculanes*, he in many places endeavors to prove the mortality of the soul, after having before labored to prove its immortality.

This is not all; in his oration for Cluentius he declares his sentiments in these terms before the whole Roman senate: "What has he suffered by death? we reject all the idle stories of the infernal regions. What has he then been deprived of by the loss of life, except the sense of his sufferings?" *Quid tandem illi mali mors attulit? nisi forte ineptiis ac fabulis ducimur, ut existimemus illum apud inferos impiorum supplicia perferre . . . quæ si falsa sunt, id quod omnes intelligunt, quid ei tandem aliud mors eripuit, præter sensum doloris?* (C. lxi.)

Even in his letters, in which men generally speak their real sentiments, has not he expressed himself thus: *Si non ero, sensu omnino carebo*: "when I am dead, I shall be in a state of perfect insensibility."

Bayle never spoke in such terms as these. Yet Cicero is put into the hands of youth, at college, by the very persons who inveigh against Bayle: How can we account for this? Only by saying that men are inconsistent and unjust.

<sup>1</sup> It is self-evident, that man cannot acquire this knowledge without assistance. The human mind derives all its knowledge from experience; no experience can give us an insight into what preceded our existence, into what is to follow it, nor into what supports it at present. In what manner have we received life? What is the spring upon which it depends? How is our brain capable of ideas and memory? In what manner do our limbs obey every motion of the will? Of all this we are entirely ignorant. Is our globe the only one that is inhabited? Was it created after other globes, or at the same instant? Does every particular species of plants proceed from a first plant? Is every species of animals produced by two first animals? The most profound philosophers are no more able to solve these questions than the most ignorant of men. All these questions may be reduced to the vulgar proverb: *Was the hen before the egg, or the egg before the hen?* The proverb is rather low, but it confounds the utmost penetration of human wisdom, which is utterly at a loss with regard to the first principles of things, without supernatural assistance.

Atoms tormented on this earthly ball,  
 The sport of fate, by death soon swallow'd, all ;  
 But thinking atoms, who, with piercing eyes,  
 Have measured the whole circuit of the skies ;  
 We rise in thought up to the heavenly throne,  
 But our own nature still remains unknown.  
 This world, which Error and o'erweening Pride,  
 Rulers accursed, between them still divide,  
 Where wretches, overwhelm'd with lasting woe,  
 Talk of a happiness they never know,  
 Is with complaining fill'd ; all are forlorn  
 In seeking bliss ; none would again be born.<sup>1</sup>  
 If, in a life midst sorrows past and fears,  
 With Pleasure's hand we'd wipe away our tears,  
 Pleasure his light wings spreads, and quickly flies,  
 Losses on losses, griefs on griefs arise.  
 The mind, from sad remembrance of the past,  
 Is with black melancholy overcast ;  
 Sad is the present, if no future state,  
 No blissful retribution mortals wait ;  
 If Fate's decrees the thinking being doom  
 To lose existence in the silent tomb !  
*All will be well ;* that hope can man sustain,  
*All now is well ;* 'tis an illusion vain.  
 The sages held me forth delusive light ;  
 Divine instructions only can be right ;  
 Humbly I sigh, submissive suffer pain,  
 No more the ways of Providence arraign ;  
 In youthful prime, I sung in strains more gay,  
 Soft pleasure's laws, which led mankind astray.  
 But times change manners ; taught by age and care,

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<sup>1</sup> We scarce ever meet with a man who would willingly recommence his past course of life, and go through the same events.

While I mistaken mortal's weakness share,  
The light of truth I seek in this dark state,  
And without murmuring submit to fate.  
A caliph once, when his last hour drew nigh,  
Pray'd in such terms as these to the Most High :  
" Being Supreme, whose greatness knows no bound,  
I bring thee what cannot in thee be found ;  
Defects and sorrow, ignorance and woe."  
Hope he omitted, man's sole bliss below.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Most nations entertained this hope even before they had the assistance of revelation. The hope of existing after death is founded upon the desire of existing during life ; it is founded upon the probability that what thinks now shall think hereafter. Of this there is no demonstration, because the contrary of whatever is demonstrated is a contradiction, and because there never was any dispute concerning demonstrable truths. To destroy this hope, Lucretius, in his third book, adduces arguments of a force which must afflict those who wish for a life to come ; but he does no more than oppose probabilities to stronger probabilities. Many of the Romans thought like Lucretius ; and these words, in a chorus of Seneca the Tragedian, were sung upon the Roman stage : *Post mortem nihil est*, "there remains nothing after death." But instinct, reason, the desire of consolation, and the good of society prevailed, and men have always hoped in a life to come ; this hope has, however, been generally accompanied with doubt. Revelation destroys that doubt, and makes it give place to certainty ; but how frightful it is to be compelled to dispute daily on revelation ; to see Christian society unsociable, divided into a hundred sects on revelation ; to commit St. Bartholomews for revelation ; to assassinate Henry III and Henry IV for revelation ; to behead Charles I for revelation ; to drag a king of Poland all bleeding for revelation ! O God, reveal to us then that we should be humane and tolerant !

THE TEMPLE OF TASTE,

AND

THE TEMPLE OF FRIENDSHIP.





## THE TEMPLE OF TASTE.<sup>1</sup>

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THAT cardinal o'er all the realm  
Revered, not he who holds the helm,  
But he who o'er Parnassus reigns,  
Renown'd for his harmonious strains;  
The patron whom all bards respect,  
Who can instruct them and protect,  
Whose eloquence we all admire,  
Who with a true poetic fire  
In Latin verse can reason right,  
Plato with Virgil can unite,  
Who vindicates high heaven to man,  
And quite subverts Lucretius' plan;<sup>2</sup>

that cardinal, whom every one must know by this picture, desired me one day to accompany him to the Temple of Taste. "It is a place," said he, "which resembles the Temple of Friendship, which everybody speaks of, which few visit, and which most of those who travel to it have never thoroughly examined."

I answer'd frankly, I must own,  
To me Taste's laws are little known;  
To favor you that god inclines,

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<sup>1</sup> This work was composed in 1731. Several editions of it have been published; but that of which we here give a translation is, by all means, the best and most correct.

<sup>2</sup> The Cardinal Polignac wrote a Latin poem against Lucretius. The *Anti-Lucrece*, not yet printed, but of which some fragments were known and very highly esteemed.

He to your hands the keys consigns ;  
You are his vicar here deputed,  
And o'er his church pope constituted.  
In furious threat all Rome may rage,  
And rave at this my honest page ;  
But there's a difference very plain  
'Twixt you and Rome's pope, I'll maintain ;  
For Sorbonne's doctors all aver,  
God's vicar upon earth may err :  
But when I hear you reason strong,  
I think you can't be in the wrong ;  
So just your reasoning, wit so bright,  
You seem infallible outright.

"Ah!" replied he, "at Rome, infallibility is confined to things which men do not comprehend: in the Temple of Taste, it concerns what all think they understand. You must positively come with me." "But," continued I, "if you carry me with you, I will make it my public boast."

I shall be importuned, I'm sure,  
To write a volume on this tour :  
Voltaire's account shall be, at best,  
But a short narrative in jest.  
But Town and Court will, without fail,  
Loudly at the relation rail ;  
The Court will murmur, and the Town  
Will, as a fibber, run me down ;  
As one who talks, with serious air,  
Of places, when he ne'er was there,  
And, readers better to engage,  
Tells a flat lie in every page.

However, as we should never refuse ourselves an innocent pleasure for fear others should think ill of us, I followed the guide who did me the honor to be my conductor.

Abbé,<sup>1</sup> with taste and genius fraught,  
 With us the sacred shrine you sought;  
 You, who with sage, enlighten'd mind,  
 At once both knowing and refined,  
 Have, by example, shown the way  
 Which we may take, nor fear to stray,  
 When in pursuit of Taste we go,  
 That god our wits disdain to know.

In our journey we had many difficulties to encounter. We first of all met with Messrs. Baldus, Scioppius, Lexicocrassus, Scriblerius, and a crowd of commentators, who made it their business to restore passages, and compile volumes upon a word which they did not understand.

The Daciers<sup>2</sup> and Saumaises<sup>3</sup> profound,  
 With learned lumber stored, I found:  
 Their faces wan, their fire quite spent,  
 With poring o'er Greek authors, bent.  
 Soon as the squalid troop I spied,  
 I raised my voice, and to them cried,  
 "To Taste's famed Temple do you bend?"

<sup>1</sup> Abbé Rothélin of the French Academy.

<sup>2</sup> Dacier was a man of great learning. He was perfectly acquainted with every thing in ancient authors, except their grace and elegance. His commentaries are replete with erudition, but destitute of taste. He has translated the most refined strokes of Horace like a pedant. When Horace says to his mistress, *Miseri quibus intentata nites*, Dacier translates the passage, "Wretched are they who suffer themselves to be allured by the calm, without knowing you." He translates, *Nunc est bibendum, nunc pede libero pulsanda tellus*, "Now is the time to drink and dance till we are tired, without being under any apprehensions." *Mox juniores quærit adulteros*, he translates thus, "They are no sooner married, but they look out for new gallants." But though he has disfigured Horace, and though his notes show him to be a man of much learning, but little genius, his work abounds with useful researches, and his industry is highly commended.

<sup>3</sup> Saumaise is a learned author, whom nobody reads. He begins his defence of Charles I in this manner: "Ye English, who play at tennis with the heads of kings, who play bowls with crowns, and who use sceptres as so many baubles."

“No, sir, we no such thing intend.  
What others have with care express’d,  
With accuracy we digest,  
On other’s thoughts we spend our ink,  
But we, for our part, never think.”

After this ingenious confession, these gentlemen would have had us read some passages of Dictys of Crete, and Metrodorus of Lampsacus, which Scaliger had spoiled. We thanked them for their kind offer, and continued our journey. We had not walked a hundred steps, when we met a person surrounded with painters, architects, carvers, gilders, pretended connoisseurs, and flatterers. They turned their backs to the Temple of Taste.

With air important, pride reposed,  
And face with gravity composed;  
And Crassus snoring, cried: “I’ve store  
Of gold, of wit, of genius more:  
With taste, sirs, I am amply fraught,  
I know all things, yet ne’er was taught;  
I’m skill’d in counsel and affairs;  
In spite of tempests and corsairs,  
My vessel safe to port I’ve brought;  
With pirates, and with winds I’ve fought,  
A palace, therefore, I shall raise,  
Which every man of taste will praise,  
Where every art shall be display’d,  
Which shall with wonder be survey’d;  
The money’s ready, no delay,  
I’ve said enough, come, now, obey.”  
It was no sooner said than done,  
To labor all the workmen run.  
To a Vitruvius, pride erects  
One of our mason architects,

Who, aiming to do something new,  
A plan too much adorned drew ;  
No porch or front the pile could show,  
But your eye meets an endless row ;  
The walls not thick, the closets great,  
The parlor without depth complete ;  
Windows, each one of which appears  
Like a church-door ; and little piers ;  
Gilt, wainscoted, and painted white,  
The whole with wonder strikes the sight.  
“ Wake, sir,” a painter cries aloud,  
“ Be to my art just praise allow’d ;  
The skill of Raphael ne’er was such ;  
He had not half so soft a touch.  
To nature I can give new grace,  
And cover all the ceiling’s space  
With various figures, which the sight  
Beholds at distance with delight.”  
Crassus awaking, took the plan,  
And to examine it began :  
Having at length the whole inspected,  
At random he its faults corrected ;  
Then glass in hand a connoisseur  
Said, “ Look upon this picture, sir ;  
Buy it, sir, ’twill your chapel grace ;  
God in his glory suits the place ;  
The taste alone’s enough to show,  
That ’tis the work of famed Wateau.”<sup>1</sup>  
Meantime a bookseller, a cheat,  
Whom wits are often forced to treat,  
Opens a case, which works contains

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<sup>1</sup> A Flemish painter who worked at Paris, where he died some years ago. He succeeded in little figures, but never produced any thing great ; it was above his capacity.

Of Gacon, Noble, Desfontaines ;  
With journals and reviews a store ;  
My lord begins to read and snore.

I thought we should meet with no further delay, and reach the Temple without any other difficulty ; but the journey is more dangerous than I imagined. We soon after fell into a new ambuscade.

Thus in the pathway to salvation  
Your devotees meet much temptation ;  
And with the devil oft contend,  
Before they reach their journey's end.

This was a concert given by a magistrate, infatuated with music, which he never learned, and chiefly with the Italian music, of which he had no knowledge but from indifferent airs that were never heard at Rome, and that are very badly sung in France by some girls belonging to the opera.

He then caused a long French recitative, set to music by an Italian, who did not understand our language, to be performed. It was to no purpose to remonstrate to him, that as this sort of music is nothing more than noted declamation, it is, of consequence, subjected to the genius of the language ; and that nothing can be as ridiculous as French scenes sung in the Italian taste, unless it be Italian ones sung in the French taste.

Nature, ingenious, fertile, wise,  
Earth with gifts various beautifies ;  
She speaks to all in language fit ;  
They differ both in tongue and wit ;  
Their tone, their voices suit ; each note  
Is by the hand of nature wrote ;  
And every difference must appear  
To a refined, judicious ear.  
Music to charm in France, the tone  
Of France must imitate alone.



Lulli could to our taste descend,  
Not strive to alter but amend.

No sooner were these judicious remarks made, but the pretended connoisseur, shaking his head, cried, "Come, come, you shall soon see something new." We could not refuse to enter, and immediately after the concert began.

—The rivals then of Lulli's fame,  
Their taste and skill in art the same,  
French verse most dissonantly play'd  
With the Italian music's aid ;  
A lady, with distorted eyes,  
Acted a thousand ecstasies ;  
A coxcomb, of his dress quite vain,  
Quaver'd and thrill'd a frantic strain,  
And beat time false, which made them soon  
All equally play out of tune.

We left the place as fast as we could, and we did not arrive at the Temple of Taste, till after we had met with many adventures of this kind.

On basis firm, in ancient days,  
Greece did this famous Temple raise.  
The building, with revolving years  
Increased, to menace heaven appears.  
The world, upon its altars laid  
Incense, and adoration paid :  
To own the power, Rome long delay'd ;  
At length, to Taste the homage paid.  
The Turk, a more inveterate foe,  
In dust the edifice laid low.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> When Mahomet II took Constantinople in 1453, all the Greeks who cultivated the arts took refuge in Italy. They were welcomed chiefly by

The ruins, by the Goths neglected,  
Were all in Italy collected.  
Soon the first Francis, nobly bold,  
Raised a new Temple like the old ;  
But his posterity despised  
An architecture once so prized.  
Next Richelieu made it all his care  
The abandon'd Temple to repair.  
Louis adorn'd the sacred shrine,  
Colbert invited all the Nine—  
Each art, in which the wise excel,  
Beneath the Temple's roof to dwell.  
By this the first shrine was surpass'd,  
But much I doubt it will not last.  
Here might I in descriptive verse  
The beauties of the shrine rehearse,  
But let us not, to show our skill in  
Description, simply write for filling ;  
Let us prolixity avoid,  
By which Felibien's readers cloy'd,<sup>1</sup>  
While he each trifle to explain,  
Launches into rhetoric strain.  
This noble building's not disgraced  
With heaps of rubbish, round it placed ;  
For thus our Gothic sires, little skill'd,  
Their Gothic structures used to build.<sup>2</sup>  
The shrine, from all the faults we see  
In Versailles' chapel famed, is free ;

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the houses of Medici, d'Est, and Bentivoglio, to whom Italy owes her politeness and glory.

<sup>1</sup> Félibien wrote five volumes on painting, but there is far less information in them than in the single volume of *Piles* (Amsterdam edition).

<sup>2</sup> There are more ornaments on the portal of Notre Dame than in all the edifices of Michael Angelo, Palladio, and Mansard.

That gewgaw, which strikes vulgar eyes,  
But which all men of taste despise.<sup>1</sup>

It is much easier to give a negative than a positive idea of this Temple. To avoid so difficult an attempt I shall only add,

The structure's of a simple taste,  
Each ornament is justly placed ;  
The whole's arranged with so much care,  
Art seems to copy nature there ;  
The beauteous structure fills the sight,  
Not with surprise, but with delight.

The temple was surrounded with a crowd of virtuosos, artists, and connoisseurs of various kinds, who endeavored to enter, but did not succeed.

For criticism, severe and just,  
Still stood before that shrine august,  
Repelling all the efforts rude  
Of Goths, who would in crowds intrude.

How many men of quality, how many persons in high vogue with the public, who dictate so imperiously to little clubs, are refused admittance into that temple ! in spite of the dinners which they give to wits and in spite of the praises they receive in the newspapers.

There the cabals of wits no more  
Have the same power they had before ;  
When they could make an audience praise  
Pradon's and Scuderi's<sup>2</sup> wretched lays,

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<sup>1</sup> The chapel at Versailles is out of all proportion : it is long and ridiculously narrow.

<sup>2</sup> Scuderi was, as well he might be, the declared enemy of Corneille. He had a party, which greatly preferred him to that father of the stage.

Against the all-immortal scene  
Of Corneille and of great Racine.

The obscure enemies of all-shining merit, those insects of society, which are taken notice of only because they bite, were repelled with equal rudeness. These would have envied the great Condé the glory he acquired at Rocroy, and Villars the reputation he gained at Denain, as much as they envied Corneille for having written *Polyeucte*. They would have assassinated Le Brun for having painted the family of Darius; and they, in fact, forced Le Moine to lay violent hands upon himself for having painted the admirable *Saloon of Hercules*. They always hold in their hands a bowl of aconite, like that which men of the same character caused Socrates to drink.

Pride coupled with Envy in odious embrace,  
Gave birth to this cursed and detestable race,  
Suspicion, self-interest, malignant detraction,  
And of devotees a most dangerous faction;  
These in secret confed'racy often combine,  
And to the cabal ope the gates of the shrine.  
There a Midas's eyes they impose on with ease;  
Knaves yield them support, and fools glut them with  
praise;  
True merit indignant a sad silence keeps;  
Time alone wipes his tears, while in secret he weeps.

These persecuting wretches fled as soon as they saw my two guides. Their precipitate flight was followed by something of

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There is still extant a wretched book of Sarrazin, written to prove that a certain piece of Scuderi's, entitled *Tyrannic Love*, is the best dramatic piece in the French language. This Scuderi boasted that four door-keepers were killed when one of his pieces was represented, and said he would never yield to Corneille till there were five door-keepers killed at the representation of the *Cid*, or the *Horatii*. As to Pradon, it is well-known, that his *Phèdre* was, at first, much more favorably received than that of Racine; and that it required a considerable time to make the influence of a party give way to merit.

a more diverting nature : this was a crowd of writers of every rank, age, and condition, who scratched at the door, and begged of Criticism to permit them to enter. One brought with him a mathematical romance ; another a speech made before the academy ; one had just composed a metaphysical comedy ; another held in his hand a collection of poems, long since privately printed, with a long approbation and a privilege ;<sup>1</sup> another presented a Pastoral Address, written in an affected and over-refined style, and was surprised to find that all present laughed instead of asking his blessing. "I am the reverend Father Albert Garassus," said a Benedictine. "I preach better than Bourdaloue ; for Bourdaloue never had books burned : and I declaimed so violently against Peter Bayle, in a small province full of sound sense, I so touched my hearers, that six severally burnt their Bayles. Never had eloquence so noble a triumph." "Go, Brother Garassus," said Criticism ; "go, savage ; leave the Temple of Taste. Leave my temple, modern Visigoth, who insults one whom I inspire." "I bring Mary Alacoque," said a very grave man.<sup>2</sup> "Go, sup with her," said the goddess.

A prating sir, with voice acute,  
 Cries, "I'm the judge of each dispute ;  
 I argue, contradict, and prate ;  
 What others like I'm sure to hate."  
 Then Criticism appearing, cried,  
 "Your merit is by none denied ;  
 But since Taste's godhead you reject,  
 To enter here do not expect."

Bardou then cried out, "The world's in an error, and will always continue so : there's no god of Taste, and I'll prove it

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<sup>1</sup> Most bad books have been printed with approbation replete with praises. Censors in this fail in respect to the public. Their duty is not to decide whether a book is good, but whether it contains any thing against the State.

<sup>2</sup> Languet de Gergy, bishop of Soissons.

thus." Then he laid down a proposition, divided and subdivided it; but nobody listened, and a greater multitude than ever crowded to the gate.

Amid the various coxcombs chased  
By judgment from the shrine of Taste,  
La Motte Houdard<sup>1</sup> among the rest  
Softly approach'd, and thus address'd:  
"Receive my *Œdipus* in prose;  
Roughly, 'tis true, I verse compose:  
I must with Boileau hold converse,  
And speak in taste against all verse."

Criticism knew him by his gentle deportment and the roughness of his last two lines, and she left him awhile between Perrault and Chapelain, who had laid a fifty years' siege to the temple, constantly exclaiming against Virgil.

At that very moment there arrived another versifier, supported by two little satyrs, and crowned with laurels and thistles.

"I come hither to laugh, to sport, and to play,  
And make merry," said he, "till the dawn of the day."<sup>2</sup>

"What's this I hear?" said Criticism. "'Tis I," answered the rhymer; "I am just come from Germany to visit you, and I have chosen the Spring of the year to travel in.

"The season in which the young Zephyrs melt  
The bark of the floods."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Houdard La Motte, in 1728, wrote an *Œdipus* in prose, and another in verse. As for his *Œdipus* in prose, nobody could ever bear to read it. His *Œdipus* in verse was acted three times. It was printed with his other dramatic works; and the author took care to prefix to it an advertisement, importing that the performance of it was interrupted during the most extraordinary success. This author composed several works, which are very much esteemed, some fine odes, pretty operas, and dissertations extremely well written.

<sup>2</sup> A couplet of Rousseau's.

<sup>3</sup> Lines of Rousseau's.



The more he spoke in this style, the less was Criticism disposed to open the door to him. "What," said he, "am I then taken for

"A frog, who from his narrow throat  
Still utters, in discordant note,  
Brekeke, kake, koax, koax?"<sup>1</sup>

"Heavens," cried Criticism, "what horrible jargon is this?" She could not immediately guess who the person was that expressed himself in this manner. She was told it was Rousseau, and that the Muses had altered his voice as a punishment for his misdeeds. She could not believe it, and refused to open the door. Yet she opened for the sake of his first verses; but exclaimed:

"O ye who hear me, gentle wits,  
If you the favor prize divine  
Of him who rules Parnassus high,  
And in your verse as it befits  
Would have Taste all his charms supply,  
Chant all your strains in Paris mine,  
Nor strike the lyre 'neath German sky."

Then making me approach, she said in a whisper: "Thou knowest him; he was thy enemy, and thou dost him justice."

"Do not his weakness thou repeat,  
In rhyming far beyond his time;  
The fruit that fills Permessus' seat  
Grows only in the Spring's fair clime,  
And age, sad hour devoid of heat,  
Only to good sense e'er can climb."

Criticism, after having given this advice, adjudged, that Rousseau should take place of La Motte as a versifier; but

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<sup>1</sup> Verses of Rousseau's.

that La Motte should have the precedence, whenever genius or understanding were the subjects of dispute.

These two men, so different from each other, had not walked four steps, when the one turned pale with rage, and the other leaped with joy, at the sight of a man, who had been a long time in the temple, sometimes in one place, and sometimes in another.

This was the learned Fontenelle,  
 Who could in all the arts excel,  
 And on each branch of science threw  
 A light that pleased, because 'twas new ;  
 He from a planet came post-haste  
 Back to the sacred shrine of taste ;  
 Reason'd with Mairan, with Quinault,  
 Trifled away an hour or so ;  
 And managed with an equal skill  
 The lyre, the compass, and the quill.

“What,” cried Rousseau, “shall I see that man here, that man against whom I have written so many epigrams? What, shall Taste suffer in her temple the author of the *Letters of Chevalier d'Her* . . . , of *An Autumnal Passion*, of *Moonlight*, of *A Brook in love with a Meadow*, of the *Tragedy of Aspar*, of *Endymion*, etc.?” “No,” answered Criticism, “'tis not the author of those works that you see before you ; 'tis the author of the *Plurality of Worlds*, a work that should have instructed thee ; who composed *Thetis and Peleus*, an opera that in vain excites your envy, and the *History of the Academy of Sciences*, which you are not capable of understanding.”

Rousseau went off to write an epigram, and Fontenelle looked upon him with that philosophical compassion, which every man of an enlightened mind must have for a mere rhymers, and then went and seated himself with great composure between Lucretius and Leibnitz.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Leibnitz was born at Leipsic, on the 23d of June, 1646, and died at Hanover on the 14th of November, 1716. He was the greatest ornament

I asked how Leibnitz came to be there? I was told that it was because he had written tolerably good Latin verses, though he was versed both in metaphysics and geometry, and that Criticism admitted him into her temple, to soften, by such an example, the austerity of his scientific brethren.

Criticism then turned to the author of the *Plurality of Worlds*, and said: "I shall not reproach you with some of your juvenile performances, as these zealous cynics have done: but I am Criticism; you are now in the presence of the god of Taste, and I must thus address you in the name of that god, the public, and myself; for we all three agree in the main.

"Your sportful and instructive Muse,  
Of art should not be so profuse;  
Her charms are, surely, not so faint,  
As to require the aid of paint."

As for Lucretius, he blushed as soon as he saw the cardinal, his adversary; but no sooner did he hear him speak than he conceived a friendship for him: he ran to him, and accosted him in very fine Latin verses, which I translate very indifferently:

"Misled by Epicurus' lore,  
Methought I nature could explore,  
And, as a god, the man admired,  
Who, with presumptuous fury fired,  
Dared impious war with heaven to wage,  
The gods dethroning in his rage.  
I thought the soul a transient fire,  
Dissolved the moment we expire;

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of letters that Germany ever produced: he was a more universal genius than Newton, though, perhaps, not so great a mathematician. To a profound knowledge in every branch of natural philosophy, he added a refined taste for polite learning; he even wrote French poetry. He seemed to be visionary in metaphysics; but in that he resembles all who have attempted to frame systems. He owed his fortune entirely to his reputation. He enjoyed considerable pensions from the Emperor of Germany, the Emperor of Russia, the King of England, and many other sovereigns.

I, now, no more with truth contend :  
The soul shall never have an end ;  
But of existence always sure,  
Like all thy works and mine endure. . . .”

The cardinal answered this compliment in the language of Lucretius. All the Latin poets present, from his air and style, judged him to be an ancient Roman ; but the French poets are highly displeased at authors composing verses in a language which is no longer spoken ; and they affirm, that since Lucretius, born at Rome, wrote a Latin poem upon the philosophy of Epicurus, his adversary, born at Paris, should have written against him in French. To conclude ; after several such amusing delays, we, at last, arrived at the temple of the god of Taste.

I saw the god, whom I in vain  
Implore for aid in every strain ;  
That god, who never was defined ;  
Whose essence 'scapes the searching mind ;  
To whom just service few can pay,  
Though they with such devotion pray ;  
Who animates La Fontaine's strain,  
And Vadius searches for in vain.  
The Graces he consults, whose ease,  
With native beauty join'd, can please ;  
Graces, which other nations own,  
Are best to the French writers known ;  
Which others oft to copy tried ;  
Which by strict rules are never tied ;  
Which reign'd at court, in times of yore,  
With which love crowns the Gallic shore.  
Around the god the tender band  
Of Graces still obsequious stand ;  
They, to adorn the god, attend—  
He pleases by the charms they lend—

And they on him the wreath bestow,  
 Which he that bends the silver bow,  
 Apollo from Parnassus' height,  
 Twined him of Maro's laurel bright,  
 Myrtle and ivy which inclose  
 A Flaccus' brow, Anacreon's rose.  
 His front, the mirror of his mind,  
 Show'd wisdom by true taste refined ;  
 Wit sparkled in his eyes, his air  
 Was such as might his soul declare.  
 To prove his beauty is divine,  
 Silvia, his face resembles thine ;  
 Thus 'neath a veil I hide your name,  
 Lest envious myriads should declaim,  
 In cries of passion, as thy charms  
 Their jealous heart fill with alarms.  
 Rollin<sup>1</sup> not far, with action grave,  
 To youth his learned lessons gave.  
 And though in his professor's chair,  
 Was listen'd to, a thing most rare !

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<sup>1</sup> Charles Rollin, formerly rector of the university and royal professor, is the first member of the university that ever wrote in elegant French for the instruction of youth, and that recommended the study of our language as necessary, though neglected in the schools. His treatise upon studies breathes elegant taste, and is replete with learning throughout. He is reproached with nothing but having dwelt too much upon things of little importance. He has never lost sight of taste, but where he has aimed at humor ; tom. iii, p. 303, in speaking of Cyrus, "Immediately," says he, "little Cyrus was dressed out as a cup-bearer ; he approached, gravely, with a napkin on his shoulder, and holding the cup, genteelly, with three fingers ; 'I was in doubt,' said he, 'whether this liquor were not poison.' 'How so ?' 'Yes, papa.'" And in another place, speaking of the several sorts of play which children may be indulged in, he expresses himself thus : "A ball, a foot-ball, a top, are very much to their taste." And liv. vii, part ii, ch. 2, art. iv, "From the roof-tree to the cellar, all spoke Latin at Robert Estienne's." It were to be wished these exceptionable pleasantries were corrected in the first new edition of a book so valuable in other respects.



Meantime in an apartment by,  
 Which Girardon with Puget vie<sup>1</sup>  
 With statues to adorn, where taste  
 As well as just expression's traced,  
 Wisely on canvas Poussin<sup>2</sup> show'd  
 What genius in his bosom glow'd.  
 Le Brun,<sup>3</sup> with elevated mind,  
 And genius nobly bold, design'd.  
 Le Sueur,<sup>4</sup> in his art complete,  
 Between both painters took his seat;  
 None murmur'd to behold him there—  
 All own'd him worthy of the chair.  
 The god, who with a critic eye  
 Could every pencil's stroke espy,

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<sup>1</sup> Girardon's statues excelled in grace, Puget's in expression. The baths of Apollo were done by Girardon, and so is that master-piece of modern sculpture, Cardinal Richelieu's mausoleum at the Sorbonne. The Milo and Andromeda are Puget's.

<sup>2</sup> Poussin, born at Andelys in 1594, had no master but his genius, assisted by a few prints of Raphael's, which accidentally fell into his hands. A desire to consult the beautiful remains of antiquity made him undertake a journey to Rome, notwithstanding the obstacles which extreme poverty laid in his way. He there produced several masterpieces, which he sold for but seven crowns apiece. Being invited to France by the Secretary of State, Desnoyers, he there established the fine taste in painting; but being persecuted by his rivals, he returned to Rome, where he died with a great reputation, and no fortune. He has sacrificed coloring to the other parts of painting. This is too gloomy in his Sacraments; yet there is in the Duke of Orleans' closet, a *Conversion of St. Paul* by Poussin, which hangs by Raphael's *Vision of Ezekiel*, and is lively enough in its coloring. This picture loses nothing by being compared to that of Raphael; they both give equal satisfaction to the beholder.

<sup>3</sup> Le Brun, the scholar of Vouet, was defective only in the coloring. The colors in his pictures of Alexander's family are better than those of his battles. This painter has not so exquisite a taste for antiquity as Poussin and Raphael; but he is equal to Raphael in invention, and superior to Poussin in vivacity. The prints of Alexander's battles, by Le Brun, are more sought than those by Raphael and Julius Romano.

<sup>4</sup> Eustache le Sueur was an excellent painter, though he never was in Italy. All his works were in the high taste; but he was defective in his coloring as well as the other two. These three painters are at the head of the French school.



Grieved, while he much admired their art,  
 They could not to their works impart  
 Those vivid colors, whose bright glow  
 On nature's self new charms bestow.  
 A crowd of Loves before him play'd,  
 And to his touch new force convey'd,  
 And raised each beauty to its height,  
 By adding Rubens'<sup>1</sup> colors bright.

I was surprised that I did not meet at the sanctuary several persons, who, sixty or eighty years ago, passed for the greatest favorites of the god of Taste. The Pavillons, the Benserades, the Pelissons, the Segrais,<sup>2</sup> the St. Evremonds, the Balzacs, the Voitures, were no longer in possession of the first places. They possessed them heretofore, said one of my guides; they made a figure before the bright period of the learned world; but they have, at length, given place to men of real genius. At present they are but little considered; and, in fact, most of them had only the wit peculiar to their age, and not that species of wit which reaches posterity.

<sup>1</sup> Rubens is equal to Titian in his coloring; but he is very much inferior to our French painters in the correctness of design.

<sup>2</sup> Segrais is but a very indifferent poet. Nobody reads his eclogues, though they are praised by Boileau. His *Aeneid* is in the style of Chapelain. He wrote an opera upon the subject of Roland and Angelica, with the title of *Love cured by Time*. In the prologue are these lines:

Pour couronner leur tête  
 En cette fête,  
 Allons dans nos jardins,  
 Avec les lys de Charlemagne,  
 Assembler les jasmins  
 Qui parfument l'Espagne.

Their heads to crown,  
 On such a day  
 Let's walk into our gardens gay,  
 And with the lilies of Charlemagne  
 Gather the jessamin of Spain.

*Zaïde* is a romance, written with great purity of language, and read by everybody; but it was not written by Segrais.

The graces of their feeble lays  
 Are faded quite in these our days;  
 None them as geniuses admit,  
 But all agree to praise their wit.

Segrais attempted one day to enter the sanctuary, at the same time repeating the following verse of Boileau :

Que Segrais dans l'eclogue en charme les forêts.  
 Let Segrais charm the woods with rural lays.

But Criticism having, unhappily for him, read a few pages of his *Æneid* in French verse, dismissed him a little roughly, and in his place admitted Madame de la Fayette,<sup>1</sup> who published the delightful romances of *Zaïde* and the *Princess of Cleves*, under the name of Segrais.

Pelisson<sup>2</sup> is not easily excused, for having in his *History of*

<sup>1</sup> M. Huet, bishop of Avranches, tells us, in the 204th page of his Commentaries, that Madame de la Fayette was so indifferent about reputation, that she suffered her *Zaïde* to appear under the name of Segrais; and when I related this anecdote, some of Segrais' friends, who were ignorant of the truth, complained of this as an outrage to his memory. But it is a fact to my certain knowledge, and I could prove it by many letters of Madame de la Fayette, and by the original manuscript of *Zaïde*, the sheets of which she sent me as she wrote it.

<sup>2</sup> Here are some of the strokes which Pelisson cites as pieces of wit. A marriage being talked of between Voiture, who was the son of a vintner, and the daughter of one of the king's purveyors, these lines were written upon the occasion—

O que ce beau couple d'amants,  
 Va goûter de contentements!  
 Que leurs délices seront grandes,  
 Ils seront toujours en festin;  
 Car si la Prou fournit les viandes,  
 Voiture fournira le vin!

He adds, in a party where they were acting charades, Voiture having given a proverb, which Madame Desloges did not like, she said, "This is a bad one, tap another." His history of the academy is filled with such trivial circumstances, and written in so languishing a style, that whoever reads it without prejudice, is surprised at his having so great a reputation. But at that time, forty persons had interested motives for praising it.

*the French Academy*, gravely related so many puerilities, and cited, as strokes of wit, things which by no means deserve that name. The soft, but weak Pavillon, humbly pays his court to Madame Deshoulières, who is placed far above him. The unequal St. Evremond,<sup>1</sup> does not presume to speak of poetry. Balzac, with his long-winded, hyperbolical phrases, tires the patience of Benserade and Voiture,<sup>2</sup> who answer him by antithesis and quibbles, which they are afterwards ashamed of themselves. I went in quest of the famous Count de Bussy. Madame de Sévigné, who is beloved by all who dwell in the Temple, told me, that her dear cousin, a man of great wit, but a little too vain, could never succeed so far, as to make the

<sup>1</sup> Everybody knows that St. Evremond was a wretched poet. His comedies are his very worst productions; yet so great was his reputation, that he was offered five hundred guineas for the copy of his *Sir Politick Wouldbe*.

<sup>2</sup> Voiture had the most reputation of any of these celebrated persons of former days, yet his works deserve it the least, if you except four or five little poems, and about as many letters. He was reckoned as great a master of the epistolary manner of writing as Pliny; and yet his letters are not superior to those of Le Pays and Boursault. These are some of his strokes: "When you tear my heart into a thousand pieces, there is not one that is not very much at your service; and one of your smiles sweetens my bitterest grief. I do not lie when I tell you that my uneasiness at being deprived of your company costs me a hundred thousand tears. I advise you, seriously, to make yourself king of Madeira. Think what a pleasure it would be to possess a kingdom of sugar; in truth, we should live very sweetly in it." He writes to Chapelain thus: "I must tell you that whenever I reflect that I am writing to the most judicious man of the age, to the author of *Lionne*, and the *Maid of Orleans*, my hair stands on end, like the bristles of a porcupine." His poetry is sometimes flat beyond all expression.

Nous trouvâmes près Sercotte,  
 Cas étrange et vrai pourtant,  
 Des bœufs qu'on voyait broutant;  
 Dessus le haut d'une motte,  
 Et plus bas quelques cochons,  
 Et bon nombre de moutons.

Yet Voiture is admired because he was born in an age that was just emerging out of barbarism, when people aimed at wit, without knowing what it was. It is true, Boileau compared him to Horace, but that was when Boileau was young. He, with pleasure, paid that tribute to the reputation of Voiture, that he might attack that of Chapelain, who passed for the greatest genius then in Europe.

god of Taste entertain the same favorable opinion of Roger de Rabutin, which the Count de Bussy had of him.

Bussy, for pride and self-love famed,  
Is by the god severely blamed ;  
Because, too much a slave to fame,  
Himself he often made his theme.<sup>1</sup>  
His son with every talent graced,  
Is always well received by Taste ;  
He flatters none, of none speaks ill ;  
His conversation pleases still ;  
He shows that wit and eloquence,  
To which his father makes pretence.  
Chaulieu,<sup>2</sup> who, gay and void of care  
Rising from table sung an air,  
Addressed the godhead as a friend,  
With freedom which could not offend.

<sup>1</sup> He wrote to the king in these terms: "Sire, such a man as I am, who have wit, birth, and courage. I have birth, and it is said I have wit, which gives value to all I say."

<sup>2</sup> The Abbé de Chaulieu, in an epistle to the Marquis de la Fare, known to the public by the appellation of the *deist*, says :

J'ai vû de pres le Styx ; j'ai vu les Euménides,  
Déjà venaient frapper mes oreilles timides  
Les affreux cris du chien de l'empire de morts.

The very next moment he draws the picture of a confessor, and speaks of the God of Israel,

Lorsqu'an bord de mon lit une voix menaçante,  
Des volontés du ciel interprète effrayante.

Such is the confessor. In another poem upon the divinity, he says,

D'un dieu, moteur de tout, j'adore l'existence.  
Ainsi l'on doit passer avec tranquillité,  
Les ans que nous départ l'aveugle destinée.

These remarks are exact, and M. de Saint Marc errs in his edition of Chaulieu in denying that they are. Many such contradictions occur in his poems. There are not three pieces among them correct throughout ; but the fine sentiments, and beautiful imagery, for which they are conspicuous, atone for their defects. The Abbé de Chaulieu died in 1720, almost fourscore, with great fortitude.

His lively and luxuriant verse  
 Roves unconfined, nor heeds the rein;  
 His muse disdaining all control,  
 With native beauties charms the soul.  
 La Fare,<sup>1</sup> with softness tempering fire,  
 Tuned to a lower note his lyre,  
 And pour'd forth in his mistress' praise  
 His incorrect, but spritely lays;  
 Which might from ease and pleasure spring,  
 Though Phœbus had not taught to sing.  
 There Hamilton,<sup>2</sup> whose darts ne'er fail,  
 At all mankind and more did rail;  
 There St. Aulaire, who for old age,  
 Surpass'd Anacreon the sage,  
 Could all love's joys and cares rehearse,  
 In softer and more pleasing verse;  
 Cytherian chaplets graced his head,  
 With hoary honors overspread.

The god had a great affection for these gentlemen, especially for those who piqued themselves upon nothing. He hinted to Chaulieu, that he should look upon himself as the first of negligent poets, not as the first of good poets.

They conversed with some of the most amiable men of their age. Their conversations were equally free from the affectation of the Hotel de Rambouillet, and from the confusion which reigns among our young fellows.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Marquis de la Fare, author of the memoirs published in his name, and of some pieces of poetry, in which the gentleness of his nature displays itself, should rather be considered as an amiable man, than an amiable poet. He died in 1718; his poems were printed with the works of the Abbé de Chaulieu, his intimate friend, and preceded by a preface extremely partial and full of faults.

<sup>2</sup> Anthony Count Hamilton, born at Caen in Normandy, wrote verses replete with fire and liveliness. He had a strong bent to satire. M. de St. Aulaire, when almost ninety, wrote exceedingly pretty songs.

<sup>3</sup> Boileau went to read his works at the Hotel de Rambouillet. He there



Now hence with equal shame are chased  
 Affected and pedantic taste,  
 The stiff and syllogistic air,  
 The rage which strives to overbear.  
 There gracefully we see unite  
 Learning profound with humor light ;  
 And with precision close we find  
 The sallies of the human mind.  
 Genius in hundred forms is there ;  
 It jests and knows a jest to bear ;  
 For fear of tiring, there the wise  
 Put on e'en pleasantry's disguise.

Chapelle was there ; that genius more debauched than delicate ; more natural than polite ; an easy versifier, incorrect in his style, and licentious in his thoughts. He constantly answered the god of Taste in the same rhymes. 'Tis said that god once answered him thus :

"Chapelle, henceforward, less admire  
 Reiterated rhymes ; they tire ;  
 Those strings of syllables display'd  
 By Richelet, ill a poet aid ;  
 That author's dictionary gleaning,  
 In double rhymes you'll have no meaning."

In this agreeable company, I met the President de Maisons, a man of a very different character, not at all used to utter words without a meaning ; a man as solid as agreeable, and equally a lover of all the arts.

"Dear Maisons, is it thee I then embrace ?"  
 Cried I, whilst trickling tears bedew'd my face ;

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met Chapelain, Cotin, and others, equally void of taste, who received him very ill.



"Thou who wast snatch'd from me by cruel death,  
 Who, in my arms, when young, resign'd thy breath!  
 Deaf to my prayer, inexorable Fate  
 Was bent two dearest friends to separate;  
 Ah! since its rigor either's death required,  
 Thou shouldst have lived, and I should have expired.  
 Since my sad eyes first open'd on the sphere,  
 'Twas Heaven's decree I should be wretched here;  
 Thy path of life by Heaven was strew'd with flowers,  
 And heartfelt joy wing'd all thy golden hours.  
 With pleasures, and with honors compass'd round,  
 In arts thy wisdom full contentment found:  
 Weakness is not of worth, like thine, the source;  
 O'er such a mind opinion ne'er had force;  
 Man's born to err; the potter's forming hand,  
 Soft earth is far less able to withstand,  
 Than can the mind resist the potent sway  
 Of prejudice, which mortals still obey.  
 To such vile slavery thou refus'dst to bend,  
 Thy time thou gav'st to study, and a friend;  
 And in thy nature were at once combined,  
 A tender heart, and philosophic mind."

Among these wits we met some Jesuits. A Jansenist would say upon this, that the Jesuits intrude everywhere, but the god of Taste receives their enemies too; and it is diverting to see in this Temple, Bourdaloue conversing with Pascal, upon the great art of uniting eloquence and close reasoning. Father Bouhours stands behind them, setting down in his pocket-book all the improprieties and inelegancies of language which escape them. The cardinal could not help addressing Father Bouhours thus:

"The care each little fault to spy—  
 Pedantic diligence—lay by;

Let us in eloquence respect  
 Each careless phrase and bold defect.  
 Were I to choose, I should prefer  
 Wild genius, and with it to err,  
 Rather than be the wight who dwells  
 On syllables, who scans and spells."

This reprimand was expressed in terms much more polite than those which I have made use of; but we poets are sometimes guilty of deviations from good breeding, for the sake of a rhyme. When I visited this Temple, my attention was not entirely engaged by the wits.

Harmonious Verse, and Prose refined,  
 To you alone, I'm not confined;  
 I scorn a taste that's fix'd on parts;  
 And now invoke all pleasing arts.  
 Music and painting, arts divine,  
 With architecture's great design,  
 Graving and dancing, all unite  
 My soul to ravish with delight;  
 From all arts pleasure must arise;  
 None then are slighted by the wise.

I saw the Muses, by turns, place upon the altar of the god, books, designs, and plans of various kinds. Upon this altar is to be seen the plan of that beautiful front of the Louvre for which we are not indebted to Bernini, who, with great expense, and to no purpose, was brought into France, it being the work of Perrault and Louis le Vau, great artists, whose merit is too little known. There, likewise, is the plan of St. Denis's gate, to the beauty of which most Parisians are as insensible as they are ignorant of the name of François Blondel, the architect, to whom they owe this monument; there, too, is that admirable fountain,<sup>1</sup> so little taken notice of, which is

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<sup>1</sup> St. Innocent's fountain. The architecture is by Lescot, abbé of Clugny, and the sculpture by Jean Goujon.

adorned with the precious sculptures of Jean Goujon, but which is in every respect inferior to the admirable fountain of Bouchardon, at the same time that it seems to upbraid the rude taste of all the others; the porch of St. Gervais, a masterpiece of architecture, to which a church, a square, and admirers, are wanting, and which should immortalize the name of Desbrosses, still more than the palace of Luxembourg, which likewise was built by him. All these monuments, neglected by the vulgar, ever barbarous, and by people of the world ever inattentive, often attract the observation of the deity. The library of this enchanted palace was next shown us; it was not very large. It will be readily believed that we did not find in it—

A heap of manuscripts most rare,  
Which greedy book-worms seldom spare;  
Nor on those shelves are ever found  
Those writings which so much abound;  
Writings by no man ever read,  
The lumber of an author's head.  
In person, here, the tuneful Nine,  
Their proper place to books assign;  
To books where genius may be traced,  
Combined with elegance of taste.

Most of the books there, have passed through the hands of the Muses, and been by them corrected. The work of Rabelais is to be seen there, reduced to less than half a quarter of its bulk.

Marot, whose only merit is his style, and who, in the same taste, sings the Psalms of David, and the Wonders of Alix, has but eight or ten leaves left. The pages of Voiture and Sarra-sin, together, do not exceed sixty in number.

The whole genius of Bayle, is to be found in a single volume, by his own acknowledgment; for that judicious philosopher, that enlightened judge of authors and sects, often declared, that

he would never have written more than one volume in folio, if he had not been employed by booksellers.<sup>1</sup>

We were, at last, admitted into the innermost part of the sanctuary. There the mysteries of the god were unveiled; there I saw what may serve as an example to posterity: a small number of truly great men were employed in correcting those faulty passages of their excellent works, which would have been beauties in those of inferior genius.

The amiable author of *Telemachus* was retrenching the repetitions and useless details of his moral romance, and blotting out the title of epic poem, which the indiscreet zeal of some of his admirers had given it; for he frankly owns, that there is no such thing as a poem in prose.

The eloquent Bossuet was ready to strike out some familiar expressions, which had escaped his vast, impetuous, and free genius, and which in some measure disgrace the sublimity of his *Funeral Orations*; and it is worthy of remark, that he, by no means, vouches for the truth of all he has said concerning the pretended wisdom of the ancient Egyptians.

Corneille the great, and the sublime,  
Who pleased not by the charms of rhyme;  
But waked the soul by strokes of art,  
Which fill'd with wonder every heart;  
Who with a pencil ever true  
Both Cinna and Augustus drew;  
Cornelia, Pompey, brave and great,  
Who fell by too severe a fate;  
Here to the flames, Pulcheria threw,  
Agésilas, Surena too,  
And sacrificed with no remorse  
The fruits of genius without force:  
Productions of declining age,

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<sup>1</sup> This Bayle himself affirmed, in a letter which he wrote to Mons. des Maizeaux.

And quite unworthy of the stage.  
Racine more artful and refined,  
Who touch'd with gentle woe the mind,  
Who still profound attention draws,  
And never breaks dramatic laws ;  
His lovers' parts, with critic eye,  
Remarks, but in them can't descry  
Those various touches, which in nature  
Distinguish character like feature :  
In all, the same perfections meet,  
They're tender, gallant, and discreet ;  
And love, whose power o'er all prevails,  
Believes them courtiers of Versailles.  
La Fontaine ! poet born to please  
By happy negligence and ease,  
Whose careless style, with bold neglect,  
Charms more than if thou wert correct :  
Thy own opinion freely tell  
Of works, which of their kind excel ;  
And, let us have thy judgment true  
Of thy own tales and fables too.

La Fontaine, who retained the simplicity of his character, and who in the Temple of Taste joined acuteness and penetration to that happy instinct, which inspired him during his life, suppressed some of his fables. He abridged almost all his tales, and tore the greatest part of a collection of posthumous works, printed by those editors who live by the follies of the dead.

There Boileau reign'd who taught this age,  
By reason roused to satire's rage ;  
Who framed, with care, poetic laws,  
And follow'd them with just applause,  
Severely, now, his works reviews ;

One quibbling poem shames his Muse ;  
The verses now he can't endure—  
Those on the taking of Namur—  
He blots them out with hasty hand,  
And cries : " Your genius understand."

Boileau, at the express command of the god of Taste, was reconciled to Quinault, who may be considered as a poet, formed by the Graces, as Boileau was by Reason.

But Boileau, satirist severe,  
Whilst he embraced, could scarce forbear  
The lyric poet to revile ;  
Yet Quinault pardon'd with a smile.

" I'll never be reconciled to you," said Boileau, " except you acknowledge that there are many insipid lines in those agreeable operas." " That is possible," answered Quinault ; " but you must, at the same time, acknowledge that you were never capable of writing *Atys* or *Armida*.

" Your poems, labor'd and exact,  
May general esteem attract ;  
My operas, composed with ease,  
May surely be allow'd to please."

After saluting Boileau, and tenderly embracing Quinault, I saw the inimitable Molière, and I made bold to accost him in these terms :

" Terence the sage, and the polite,  
Could well translate, but could not write ;  
His elegance is cold and faint,  
He could not Roman manners paint.  
You, the great painter of our nation,  
Have drawn each character and station ;



Our cits with maggots in their brain,  
Our marquisses as pert as vain,  
Our formal gentry of the law,  
All, by your art, their likeness saw ;  
And you would have reform'd each fault,  
If sense and virtue could be taught."

"Ah," said he, "why was I ever under a necessity of writing for the people? Why was I not always master of my time? I should have invented much more happy intrigues; I should have seldom descended to low comedy."

It was thus these masters, in their several arts, showed their superiority, by owning those errors to which human nature is subject, and from which the greatest geniuses are not exempt.

I then found that the god of Taste is very hard to be pleased, but that he is never pleased by halves. I perceived, that the works which he criticises the most, are those which he likes best.

The god takes every author's part,  
Provided pleasing be his art ;  
No anger he in censuring shows ;  
With transport his applause bestows.  
The Muse displays her charms divine,  
And brings her heroes to his shrine ;  
The power benign can scarce forbear,  
Seeing their faults, to drop a tear.  
That wretch should be to woe consign'd,  
Who's not to tenderness inclined ;  
By such our nature is disgraced ;  
He flies the sacred shrine of Taste.

When my guides were going to retire, the god addressed them in terms to this effect, for I am not permitted to use his own words—

"Farewell, my much-loved friends, farewell,  
Since you in poetry excel ;

Let not, in Paris, dire disgrace !  
My rival e'er possess my place.  
False Taste, I know, from your keen eyes  
In terror and confusion flies ;  
If ever you should meet that foe,  
You'll him by this description know :  
His tawdry dress is void of grace,  
His air's affected ; o'er his face  
He forces oft a languid smile,  
And talks in the true coxcomb's style ;  
He takes my name, assumes my shape,  
Of genuine taste the awkward ape ;  
For he's the son of Art at most,  
Whilst Nature as my sire I boast."

## THE TEMPLE OF FRIENDSHIP.

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SACRED to peace, within a wood's recess,  
A blest retreat, where courtiers never press,  
A temple stands, where art did never try  
With pompous wonders to enchant the eye ;  
Where are no dazzling ornaments, nor vain,  
But truth, simplicity, and nature reign.

The virtuous Gauls raised, erst, the noble shrine,  
And sacred vow'd to Friendship's power divine.  
Mistaken mortals, who believed their race  
Would never cease to crowd to such a place !  
Orestes' name and Pylades' appear,  
Carved on the front—names still to Friendship dear—  
The bold medallion of good Pirithoüs,  
Those of Achates wise and mild Nisus.  
All these are heroes, and as friends renown'd,  
Their names are great, but still in fable found.

The learned sisters chant but in this hall,  
For they are hiss'd upon Olympus tall.  
Nor Mars doth here appear with Venus by,  
For Discord with them e'er keeps company.  
Friendship with few immortals finds a place ;  
Most of the gods avoid her chaste embrace.  
Still in her presence faithful Truth attends,

And to the goddess needful succor lends :  
Truth's ever ready to enlighten all,  
But few on Truth for kind assistance call.  
In vain she waits for votaries at her shrine,  
None come, though all, at wanting her, repine ;  
Her hand holds forth the register exact,  
Of every gen'rous, every friendly act ;  
Favors in which esteem with friendship vied,  
Received not meanly, not conferr'd with pride :  
Such favors as those who confer, forget,  
And who receive, declare without regret.  
This history of the virtues of mankind,  
Within a narrow compass is confined ;  
In Gothic characters it is all traced  
Upon two sheets, by time almost defaced.

By what strange phrenzy is mankind possess'd ?  
Friendship is banish'd now from every breast ;  
Yet all usurp of Friend the sacred name,  
And vilest hypocrites bring in their claim.  
All, that they're faithful to her laws, declare,  
And e'en her enemies in her name swear.  
In regions subject to the Pope's command,  
Thus we see beads oft in an atheist's hand.

'Tis said the goddess, each pretended friend,  
Once in her presence summon'd to attend ;  
She fix'd the day on which they should be there,  
A prize proposing for each faithful pair,  
Who with a tenderness like hers replete,  
Amongst true friends might justly claim a seat ;

Then quickly ran, allured by such a prize,  
The French, who novelty still idolize.

A multitude before the temple came ;  
And first two courtly friends preferr'd their claim ;  
By interest join'd, they walk'd still hand in hand,  
And of their union friendship seem'd the band.  
Post-haste a courier came and made report,  
That there was then a vacancy at court.  
Away each friend polite that moment flies,  
Forsakes at once the temple and the prize ;  
Thus in a moment friends are turn'd to foes,  
Each swears his rival warmly to oppose.

Four devotees next issue from the throng,  
Poring on prayer-books as they pass along ;  
Their charity to mankind overflows,  
And with religious zeal their bosom glows.  
A pamper'd prelate one, with fat o'ergrown,  
Tripple-chin'd, much to apoplexy prone ;  
The swine quite gorged with tythes, and overfed,  
At length, by indigestion's force, falls dead.  
Quick the confessor clears the sinner's score,  
His form's annealed, his body sprinkled o'er,  
And spruced up by the curate of the place,  
To go his heavenly journey with good grace.  
His three friends o'er him merrily say pray'rs,  
His benefice alone excites their cares :  
Devoutly rivals grown, each still pretends  
Attachment most sincere to both his friends ;  
Yet all in making interest at the court,  
Their brothers downright Jansenists report.

Two youths of fashion next came arm in arm,  
Whose eyes and hearts their mistress' letters charm.  
These as they pass'd along they read aloud,  
And both display'd their persons to the crowd ;

Some favorite airs they sing, whilst they advance  
Up to the altar, just as to a dance.  
They fight about some trifle, one is slain,  
And Friendship's altar hence receives a stain,  
The least mad of the two, with conquest crown'd,  
Left his dear friend expiring on the ground.

Next Lisis, with her much-loved Chloé came ;  
From infancy their pleasures were the same ;  
Alike their humor, and alike their age ;  
Those trifles which the female mind engage,  
Lisis was prone to Chloé to impart ;  
They spoke the overflowings of the heart.  
At last one lover touch'd both female friends,  
And, strange to tell ! here all their Friendship ends.  
Lisis and Chloé Friendship's shrine forsake,  
And the high road to Hatred's temple take.

The beauteous Zara shone forth in her turn,  
With eyes that languish, whilst our hearts they burn.  
"What languor," said she, "reigns in this abode !  
By that sad goddess, say what joy's bestow'd ?  
Here dismal Melancholy dwells alone,  
For love's soft joys are ever here unknown."  
Leaving the place, crowds follow'd her behind,  
And, struck with envy, twenty beauties pined.

Where next my Zara went, is known to none.  
And Friendship's glorious prize could not be won ;  
The goddess everywhere so much admired,  
So little known, and yet by all desired ;  
Alas ! upon her sacred altar froze ;  
Hence, hapless mortals, hence derive your woes.



## ENVOI.

My friend ! so good, so often tried,  
This heart to thine was not yet tied,  
When I so confidently said  
That none to Friendship homage paid.  
Two hearts before her now confess  
Her power omnipotent to bless.  
Alas ! and can true love, at most,  
Of any greater conquest boast ?









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